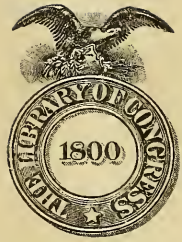
# JAPAN

## ASPECTS & DESTINIES

W. PETRIE WATSON




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# JAPAN: ASPECTS AND DESTINIES




GUARDING CHILDISH FEET.

[Cartoon by the *Jiji*, the leading Japanese newspaper, on the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The 'children' are China and Korea. The principal declared object of the Alliance is to guard Chinese and Korean integrity.]

# JAPAN

## ASPECTS & DESTINIES

BY

W. PETRIE WATSON

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# PREFACE

The first papers of this book were written in Japan fifteen months ago, with the writer's mind innocent of a notion that the book must appear in the hour—almost, as it seems, in the moment—of a supreme crisis, possibly the supreme crisis, of Japan's modern history, perhaps of all her history. The author began with a hope of executing something in the nature of a vignette of manners; at the most, or at the best, of executing a picture of the strange evolutions of a great political, industrial, social, ethical Idea—the Japanese Revolution. Circumstances—but not circumstances alone, for there were the inherent seductions of the task—make him responsible for something of the nature of a political, even a polemical, treatise. It is true, indeed, that any personal contact, however fugitive, with the current of Far Eastern politics in these recent times must have turned the eyes of any one possessing a spark of imagination, forward to the looming of the great trouble which at this moment engages the world's thought and speculation, if not its moving anxiety. Therefore there was always the chance that this or any other book on Japan, undertaken in these recent times, might 'hit'

the 'psychological moment' in full career, and, incidentally, load its writer at least with a suspicion of the repugnant guilt of manufacturing a book for an epoch—that is to say, of deliberately and of set purpose lying in wait for the 'moment' and ministering, with dubious private purpose and doubtful public benefit, to its unnatural needs. This onus the author repudiates without length of words. Events are chiefly guilty, not he. So much as this should be open to the candid reader in the book itself. What may not be so clear is the writer's mind and admission about Japan. This is that Japan is—incomprehensible, not to be understood. This, indeed, is one of the very tritest things he, or any one else, could say about Japan. Nevertheless, and having written his book, he says it. It is his confession. He does not understand Japan. This is the background of his book —the incomprehensibility, the impenetrability, the mystery of Japan. The writer has made a book about that which he does not understand—not a new precedent in literature perhaps. It is the person who stays three weeks or three months in Japan who understands it. The present writer, unfortunately for his hope of understanding it, spent three years in it—in close, daily, arduous association with its people, with its problems, with its politics. Therefore he does not understand Japan. There is an Englishman of Tokyo who has spent three decades in Japan—his sojourn unbroken by a single flying visit to his own country or to the nearer Americas. He has seen all, he has been in the midst of all,

almost he has been an actor in all the wonderful events of the wonderful history of Japan since 1870, or thereabouts. He is a master of the Japanese tongue. He has compiled a great dictionary of the language. He is married to a Japanese lady; he has, if I mistake not, a son in the Japanese Army. He has just lately completed a work — a Work — on Japan in eight splendid volumes — of infinite learning and scholarship. Yet this gentleman has on various occasions made public confession that he does not understand Japan — not quite in so many words, perhaps, but clearly to this effect. And he and his high reputation were to be less esteemed if he made any other opposite profession. Hence may the present writer be absolved of the crime of an unseemly temerity in making a book about that which he does not understand. I have great, almost illustrious, exemplars—men of my own race, of almost a lifetime's residence in Japan, who have made small libraries about Japan without having understood. Nescience is always bold, often presumptuous. Yet where is the limit of speculation in face of the Unknowable? There is no measure of the immeasurable, no plummet for the unfathomable. By this token I claim indulgence for my speculations in face of the Japanese Unknowable—in plain terms for the views of Japan and the Japanese destiny set forth in my concluding chapters. I have, indeed, pleas, or a plea — besides illustrious example — in extenuation of the rest of the book. Wagner's saying—I quote it appropriately from one of my

exemplars—is : '*Alles Verständniss kommt uns nur durch die Liebe.*' 'Love' is certainly my plea, with 'understanding' a question in abeyance, for I have confessed nescience. But, for these concluding chapters aforesaid, I make bold enough to claim that, at least, they take Japan, and the Japanese destiny, seriously. Hitherto the Japanese Unknowable seems to have given excuse chiefly for mirth. Because people have not understood, they have laughed. Ignorance, indeed, commonly laughs, but knowledge of ignorance, consciousness of it, ought to regulate another mien. Is it not time for us of Western Europe to know our ignorance; to recognise the Unknowable, and wear against it a more continent face, if as yet we find it difficult to adopt about it a more serious mind? Is it not time in these pregnant opening weeks of 1904? I might urge this, if nothing besides—that by taking Japan seriously, we at least ensure against Japan taking us by surprise. I might urge more, but it must suffice that I bring a Bishop into the witness-box. After he had written his concluding papers, the writer by chance turned up among his notes and cuttings a letter of the Anglican Bishop of South Tokyo. If by quoting it he seem to deprive his own speculations of their originality, he at any rate secures a respectable ally for the defence of their probability. The Bishop of South Tokyo in 1901 wrote to his ecclesiastical *confrères* in England as follows: 'That the leaders here are absolutely settled and consistent in their intention that Japan shall be a Western, not an Eastern Power, in its methods and associations, and,

so far as Western ideas are good, in its ideas also, seems to me about the most certain and stable fact in Japanese politics. But if this is so, then if Japan were to lead China, which does not look very likely at present, it would only be by regenerating China, and this would be done according to Western ideas except so far as these are deliberately altered for the better by the infusion of what is thought by Japan to be best in the Eastern. I do not think the probability of any such movement on a world-affecting scale likely in the near future, but if it did come, and Japan with China became a leading influence in the world's thought and government, it would only be so because Japan, by taking out of its treasures things Eastern and Western, things new and old, had become the best leader for the next stage of human progress.' I feel that by this Bishop I am justified. Upon his reverend authority, by this high episcopal example, I am not to be charged with eccentricity in taking Japan seriously, any more than I am to be charged with making a book for an occasion, because it happens that Japan is in the world's eye when this book appears.

The author wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to many Japanese newspapers, and to all the foreign —that is European—journals published in Japan. From their columns he has drawn many of his quotations of Japanese opinion on a variety of matters. He desires especially to mention the *Japan Times*, of Tokyo, a Japanese-owned, Japanese-edited

journal, printed in English, and the *Japan Mail*, of Yokohama. He had recourse, also, while in Tokyo, to the *Transactions* of the Asiatic Society of Japan; and he has, on occasion, verified the results of his own experience and observation by reference to Professor Chamberlain's *Things Japanese*, Griffis's *Mikado's Empire*, and other works. Acknowledgment is made in the book itself of quotations from some other sources.

W. PETRIE WATSON.

*January* 30, 1904.

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Tilla Dou Matis
Malos Madou
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# I

## A SPECTACLE OF PARADOX

DESPITE much testimony to the contrary, you do not require when in Japan to consult the history books to assure yourself that the country was held in fee simple fifty years ago by brothers of the famous barons who met our King John on Runnymede; or that in 1860, and even 1870, it was possible that a head should roll into a Japanese ditch when a vile trafficker in merchandise tainted the hem of a military gentleman's robe with the breath of his wares. The Japanese Samurai was a wonder at swordsmanship. A few of the old British and other foreign residents of Yokohama at this day will tell you that his 'upper-cut' stroke, made in the process of drawing his blade from its sheath—the very process itself, in fact—was often the deadliest. They used to see it in the early days, thirty and forty years ago.

Most writers of books on Japan suggest to you that these things are impossible, implying that a Feudal Era in Japan thirty years ago is a myth. They are those who stay a month or six weeks and write their book. Live in the country six months before writing your book, and you may begin to believe that a Feudal Era is possible, say one hundred years back. Let your

# EASTERN ASIA

## (THE NEW WORLD-THEATRE)

Scale of English Miles.

0 50 100 200 300 400 500

East from 75 Greenwich.

Stanford's Geographical Estabt London.

London: Grant Richards.

sojourn be of a year or eighteen months, and you will find reason to bring the Feudal Era rather nearer the present. You may probably then have concluded that Japan was a feudal state up to thirty or forty years ago, which is exactly what History relates. On the other hand, to become a permanent resident is to yield slowly to the conviction that Japan must have struggled out of the semi-barbarism of 1200 A.D. in the very year before your arrival.

This is one of the enigmas of an enigmatic country. One sees Japan in six weeks and writes a panegyric; one worships the most hideous of her graven images. One lives ten years in the land and accumulates a heavier bill of grievances against it year by year. The country is charming; but it is disgusting. The people are amiable, but they are detestable. Where is truth? For my part, I shall presume to say that a person of knowledge and intelligence, of a fair mind, and having no peculiar or particular injuries to resent, should, after a residence of a year or two in Japan, conclude, without referring to the history books, that Japan's garment of Western civilisation may have been put on a hundred years ago or so. The history books will tell him that it is only thirty or forty years old. The European resident will at the least try to convince him that beneath it there is the garb of the bloody and beautiful Feudal Era. After a while the person of fair mind will be almost convinced that only the history books are right.

Quite lately they proposed to build a living man into the pier of a bridge for superstition's sake. This was worse than the Feudal Era. A friend of mine lately spent a few days on one of the large islands of Japan's peerless Inland Sea. With one of the crowds which

came to view him was an old lady, who asked if this was a foreigner, and 'if he ate men.' Here it was back to the days of Japan's isolation and ignorance at a bound. 'Way back inland you will be bowling along the trough of a valley which might be fresh-fashioned from the hand of the Master of Beautiful Things, when you may see a lonely peasant frame himself in the doorway of his gloomy hut, and lift his hands with reverence to the sun, newly piercing the morning mist. You will see his lips move and his head incline. He is a sun-worshipper. I have seen a Japanese halt in the crowded street of a great town, and lift the same reverent hands to the same deity. Fifty people might pass before he said 'Amen' to his orison, but these without wonder. I asked a Salvation Army lass from London, who is a 'captain' of the forces in Japan, whether she found the religious temper among the Japanese. Said she, 'I have some of the truest Christians I ever knew down in ——,' naming her centre of operations, an inland town. I asked Marquis Ito—he is a professed Agnostic—whether Japan had a substitute for religion, if ultimately she should abandon her Buddhism and Shintoism and refuse Christianity. 'We have knowledge, science, culture, for a religion,' he said in effect. Here is the whole diapason of human history to date. At one end they build a living being into a wall to appease the unappeasable—Superstition. At the other there is a statesman who is more positive than the Positivists. Between, there is everything and nothing. Meeting Marquis Ito, you say the story of a feudal state thirty years back must be an historic illusion. You see a peasant's obeisance to the sun, and think the Japanese must have sprung from Nature last year.

Is it surprising that there should be the deadliest

conflict of testimony about Japan among the plausible authorities? Her modern civilisation is called a veneer. She is elsewhere acclaimed the England of the East; and we cannot be persuaded that England's civilisation is a veneer. What if both descriptions contain a measure of the truth? I have read in Japan that Marquis Ito still fears possible reaction, with its terrors. That would be the veneer peeled off. To this day there are old men—once men of authority in the land, territorial lords and knightly gentlemen—who live apart, in dreams and reverie. They abhor—at least they shun—the foreigner—the man from the West who has dug the grave of the Old Japan. They gaze into their lotus ponds, palisaded from the outer world, and behold visions of the past; they nurse their chrysanthemums in secret arbours and cherish memories. But they do not wait. They know enough not to hope. If ever reaction were to raise its monstrous head in Japan, it would not receive its animus from them. They only regret.

The truth—with an eternal 'perhaps'—is, it is not now a struggle between the New and the Old in Japan. The spirit of the Old is dead. Its life has passed from it, and a dead thing can hardly be an active combatant. The Old would have to be re-born in a new shape, baptized with a new spirit, if it should ever fight the New. But the Old has left its clothes behind and its furniture—perhaps part of its house. These you may find in Japan almost anywhere. These the soured or disappointed foreigner would conjure for you into a living spirit, a masked demon, a painted fury, biding a time to stampede and sweep the New from the land with a whirlwind of reaction. The ogre—again with the 'perhaps' which refuses to be eliminated—is nothing

but clothes, which is equivalent to saying that Japan's history since 1859 is genuine; that it rings true; that her new civilisation is not a veneer.

Nowadays, the offices of many of the leading Japanese business firms in the large towns are fitted and furnished on the European model. The clerks sit on chairs or stools, at tables and desks. The principals will have carpeted floors, cuspidors, and roll-top desks. There is a public counter with wire guards and glass partitions. The clerks wear European dress. Some of the banks in Tokyo and Osaka, the two great cities of the land, are mercantile palaces — polished granite entrance halls, brass-bound swinging doors, mosaic and parquetry floors, deep-coffered ceilings, columns and pilasters of polished stone, counter fittings of bronze; the office air heated in winter by patent American hot-water apparatus. But managers and clerks go home in the evening to little houses where the walls are of paper pasted on wooden slats; where the floors are spread with mats of straw; the ceilings so low that a tall European may bump his head; where there are no chairs and no tables; where the bed is a quilt laid on the mats; where charcoal in a brazier suits for a fire, at which, in winter, you warm your hands and try to forget that the rest of you is somewhere in the Arctic regions; where, in short, everything is Japanese as it was in the beginning—Japanese, and neat and clean, but, to the European sense, uncomfortable to the point of impossibility. In the midst of it, the bank manager and clerk bow to you in their silk *kimono;* and they might invite you to their evening meal of rice, raw fish in soy, uncooked vegetables, and green tea.

This, let me tell you, is what Japan is doing all the way through—living a double existence, being a Jekyll

and a Hyde, and perhaps, in some matters, a Janus. The New in the daytime, the Old in the evening; but in essential things almost always the New. The spirit of the Old has fled, but Japan wears its clothes when and where it doesn't matter.

Take this example in the realm of ideas. Recently Japan was threatened by the plague—the curse of Asia, which, except Japan, is as a stricken field before the scourge. Japan met the enemy at the gates and drove him out in brief time and with small loss. A policeman at one of the 'open' ports (the ports where the foreign trade is done) was placed on plague duty with others—burning debris, disinfecting, examining. His wife fell ill—not of plague. The husband was informed that the wife was dying at home. Of his own initiative he decided that plague duty was more peremptory than a dying wife. His place might have been taken by scores of his fellows, and the plague crisis was not acute, but he refused leave of absence. The wife died, not having seen him. The policeman was praised. I am not sure that he was not promoted. It was virtue in him—to us quixotic, blamable virtue, but part of Japan's mental or ethical furniture from the old days.

It is everywhere, this congruous incongruity. It is a thousand years of feudal history, Japanese ethics, and Oriental seclusion mingling with a millennium of European civilisation swallowed in half a century. Almost necessarily, the process of deglutition is ludicrous, pathetic, sublime, contemptible, admirable, detestable, tragic, terrible, and sometimes merely petty.

In the streets you will see a Japanese husband take the evening air. His wife walks a regulation number of paces behind him. At home or elsewhere he will

keep one mistress, or two, the wife indifferent, or, especially if she be childless, approving. Yet if European convention is law for a particular occasion, the Japanese gentleman would sooner leave his head behind than his European frock-coat. The Japanese legislature a year or two ago passed a law prohibiting smoking by minors, but smoking by women has come down the ages and continues. A district government recently ordered sea-bathers to wear 'University' suits; but in summer you will see Japanese coolies on any wharf labouring in a loin-cloth, or less. The Japanese, from the day-labourer upwards, is born with the artistic sense, but his police authorities drape the nude in exhibition pictures of the European school, even if by Japanese artists. Dr. Kitasato, a Japanese, claims to have discovered the bacillus of plague. Perhaps he did—at the worst he was not far behind the actual discoverer—but there is no doubt that on their temple festival days millions of Japanese pass their fingers along the jaws of a greasy stone or wooden image of the god Binzuru, and then rub their own to cure their toothaches. For rheumatism, they choose the particular joint; for lung disease, they rub the effigy's chest; for disease of the eye, they transfer efficacy from the sightless sockets of the deity. All the old people of Japan are happy; their sons and daughters make it a law of life—this, perhaps, is chiefly Confucian and Chinese—to ease the burdens of their age. Yet Japanese lepers offend the public air at street corners. Their hideous fate is their own; none will ease it, least of all Government. The poorest Japanese bathes in hot water once a day, but the richest municipality in the country knows practically nothing of sanitary science. If there are drains, they

are open gutters, out of which, in dry weather, the street is soused. Yet the interior of the little Japanese house is often a dream of simple, chaste prettiness.

To enumerate all this category would be to state most of the facts and features of the civilisation of Europe with their logical opposites, their natural antitheses; it would be to record all that European civilisation is, and all that it is not.

It is Orientalism and the Middle Ages jostling the Twentieth Century and England; a medley, a revolution, a convulsion in being; the evolution of man in a generation.

It is inspiring; sometimes it is discouraging, disappointing, irritating. It is always interesting, or should be, for there has been no spectacle on earth like it since time began.

## II

## A FANTASY OF MYSTERY

It would appear that one must be a novice in order to be able to furnish an estimate of the Japanese character. Professor Basil Hall Chamberlain, an Englishman who lately taught the Japanese their own language in the Imperial University of Tokyo, and has written more about Japan—or more successfully—than any other stranger, refers you, with compliments, to other writers when it devolves on him in his best-known book to discuss the character of this people. An Englishman of a quarter of a century's residence in the country said to me: 'When you've been six weeks in Japan you know everything. In six months you begin to doubt. In six years you are sure of nothing.' Another friend of mine, of important capacities, who has spent the best part of a lifetime in the land, and has met its people on many planes, sums up the discussion in the fashion of this somewhat mysterious interrogatory: 'Has anybody lived twenty years in Japan and written a book about it?' 'You never know where you are in dealing with the Japanese,' the foreigner who does business with the people in their own country will tell you. Yet if you pursue the subject you will find that this man, the foreign trader, has an assurance which is quite absolute upon certain points. You never met

a more confident man than the foreign trader in Japan—be his residence in the country of one or of twenty years' standing—when the question tabled concerns the commercial character of the Japanese. Here you find a man whose mind is made up; who for immutability stands upon a rock; who will not be moved; who has forgotten, if he ever knew, that our own infinitely wise Mr. Burke has declared it to be impossible to draw an indictment against a whole nation. Even so, this man, if you catch him unawares by putting the question before him in another form, tells you he never knows where he is in doing business with the Japanese. 'They are rogues,' says he, 'but they may be all right.'

Catch the missionary off his guard—the missionary on formal occasions accepts it as his duty to put away all uncharitableness—and he will say they are a mysterious people whose heart is encased in an iron casket which doesn't contain it.

If one can do it, it is perhaps best to do as Mr. Percival Lowell did, and write epigrams about the Japanese. One does this, howsoever one writes, if you believe Sir Ernest Satow, lately and for long our minister at Tokyo, and in that capacity acquiring a greater store of learning about the Japanese and their country than any other man from over the sea. A friend of his reports his having said that he has never read a book about Japan which he has found in any sense of the word correct. It is easily credible, and Sir Ernest Satow's book would probably be the least accurate of all. Wherefore he has written nothing; only collaborated in a dictionary and a guide-book.

Perhaps this mystery is the chasm, the unbridgeable gulf which separates the East from the West; the

Orient, which wins by stealth from the Occident, which triumphs by force. Perhaps it is another phase of the conflict betwixt the old man which the country is putting off, and the new which it is putting on.

But it is not all mystery. Japan's national character is not wholly a point of interrogation. There is, for instance, no doubt about the permanence of her people's character for politeness. It is possible they may be losing it. His manners are the last thing the born gentleman loses, and though Japan has thrown overboard much of her heritage of the canons and habitudes of the Feudal Age, she remains polite. This—her politeness—is a sweet savour everywhere in the land; it illumines the gloomiest hovel; it thrives on the humblest fare. A jinrikisha-puller seldom passes another, carrying a 'fare,' without a word of apology or explanation. How strange London would think it to hear the cabby who whipped past the cob ahead of him shout to the other driver a polite expression of his regrets and his regards! Far away among Japan's inland mountains you will meet a group of urchins who will drop you a unanimous and spontaneous curtsey, and often a grave one. The person who is spoken to in friendly conversation is as 'honourable' in Japan to-day as ever. So are his wife and his second cousin. The person who speaks is as much of a hog as ever; his wife has to be apologised for now as in the palmy days of Ceremony, and his second cousin is at the best a lout of a fellow.

But away from this and some other firm ground in this question of Japan's national character, what is there and where are we? Can we do more than ask questions? Are these people truth-tellers? Do they know reverence? Do they admire great things? Do they pursue

idealisms? Do they know the true ambition and the true humility? Do they know where each becomes a transgression of the law? Do they know to keep their eyes on the stars and their feet on the earth? Are they sons and daughters of History, or of yesterday? Do they know in what things man is an angel and in what things a devil? Have they learned sacrifice?

Strange enigma! Hardly on one of these matters could even a Japanese speak with assurance for the whole of his people.

You may proclaim on unchallenged authority that the Japanese know and pursue the practice of good manners, the offices of kindliness; that they know and pursue beautiful things with perhaps more of sincerity and simplicity than the Greeks; that they are lovers of their country and behold their king with awe; that as dutiful sons and daughters they adorn the story of humanity.

These things to their honour. On the other side I shall quote some Japanese authorities. Says one of their writers: 'In the matter of mutual distrust we Japanese know that it exists to such an extent that we are hard put to it when having to defend ourselves against the charges brought by foreigners.' This chiefly in matters of commerce and business—whence the foreign trader's grudge against this people, with whom 'he never knows where he is,' as I have quoted.

Says a notable Japanese Christian (a clergyman): 'The Japanese readily gives up, and says there is no help for it; or, when fighting against some enemy, he again very quickly makes peace. To fight to the bitter end, even in the cause of righteousness, is not his strong characteristic. To take care of himself, and be faithful until his time of death comes, nay more, to cherish the

noble hope of eternal life—this spirit I believe he can attain unto only through the influence of Christianity.'

One of their philosophers of the day writes: 'Japanese morality consists of an appeal to the feelings. Filial piety, loyalty, what are they but sentiments? Our education is all centred on the education of the emotions. Until we pay more attention to the development of the intellect and the will we shall not be qualified to rank with the foremost nations.'

I have again Père ——'s opinion sweetly distilled to me in the garden he loved, a garden of suburban Tokyo. Let me give it to show how, after twenty years of the intimacy of service of this race, they are only a mitigated mystery. I cannot, unfortunately, report Père ——'s benignant eye, nor the sibilant cadences of his Flemish accent.

'The Japanese,' said he, as we walked in his garden, 'the Japanese seem to me exactly like children. You do not expect a moral act from a child, and it is exactly so with this people. You may get one who is honest and will remain so for a considerable time, but it is impossible to say that he will not break away to-morrow, or to-day, in the manner of a child.

'As to religion, I think, as you say, that they do not have the religious "faculty." The after-life does not enter into their view at all. Their Shintoism takes no account of an after-life except in the form of transmigration. They have, indeed, their Shinto hero-gods, which are like our Catholic saints—men who died long ago, but who, as the priests tell them, are in the spirit-world protecting them. There is no real idea of the continuance of their own lives, nor of God. There is no feeling of the supernatural as we think of it, and therefore no feeling of a thing called religion.

'As to the character of the Japanese they are, as I say, children. For instance, they have no capacity for forethought. The Japanese are, I think, the most perfect Christians in the world, for they certainly do as the Bible says, they "take no thought for the morrow." Indeed, I think they must be more perfect than Christ Himself, for in the morning they take no thought for the afternoon. They are remarkable for their lack of fixity of purpose, especially in their occupations. I often tell them about this in my sermons. I say to them that if they are potato merchants to-day they should stick to that business and not run off to-morrow to be railway porters or street cleaners. I tell my congregations that they must be reasonable beings before they can be good Christians.

'Sometimes I think the future of the country must be great, but oftenest I am depressed by many signs around me, and so relapse into doubt. The longer I am here and the more I see, I think the less enthusiastic I am about them.

'There is an abyss between Europeans and Japanese. I believe that that abyss can be bridged by Christianity and by Christ alone.'

Père —— tried to amuse me, I think. He succeeded, but he forgot the governing men of Japan.

This finally, though it is merely the statement of a prize-winner in a Tokyo newspaper symposium on an allegation that early development and early decay are characteristics of the Japanese: 'Japanese have four defects: (1) They are quick-witted, but weak; (2) they are satisfied with small attainments; (3) they soon weary of things they undertake; (4) they grow old too soon.'

On the important matters to which these quotations

are apposite there is probably a passable unanimity even among the Japanese themselves. The ruck of the people is somewhat shifty; somewhat easily dashed in enterprise; somewhat superficially emotional; somewhat easily 'satisfied with small attainments.'

Beyond these things, which are not for admiration, and beyond those others I have quoted which are honourable, there is a great unknown, where even they themselves feel that they walk in chaos, a chaos—not an anarchy—which is probably forming into Beauty, but which the devil's advocates among Japan's critics would have you believe is to take the horrid shape of Japan's Tarpeian rock with the sea of destruction below.

This unknown holds the embryo of the soul of the Japan of the future. This chaos holds in suspension the constituents of Japan's national character. There has already been a deposit from the New, as there is a solid residuum from the Old, but the body of this people's national genius, this people's soul, is in the air, in the womb, in chaos, in mystery.

The educated Japanese who knows what you mean when you ask for a glimpse of the soul of his country and his people tells you that it is Bushido—the code of the military gentlemen, the knights, of the Old Japan; our own early-day chivalry with the ladies left out, or with the master, the lord of the soil, the baron and his authority, displacing the ladies and the church. But Bushido does not carry us very far on the way to comprehension and understanding of the Japanese character to-day. How could it, when you know that the Japanese military class numbered two millions, and that the Japanese nation to-day is forty-four or forty-five millions strong? How could it when you know that

an avalanche of new ideas has been poured in upon the land from Europe—Europe, which is six hundred years away from a code with a recognisable family resemblance to Bushido—Europe, which in those six hundred years has taken unto herself innumerable new gods?

Japan at present cannot be classified by national attributes. There is a meagre list of postulates for the majority of the people—that they are artists, patriots, practisers of the graces of life; that they are crafty in treaty, but withal 'satisfied with small attainments'; emotional. Nobody knows anything more for certain; whether they have imagination, magnanimity, the mind for great attempts and great sacrifices; self-reliance, the instinct for the practical based on the ideal, the capacity for hardness without cruelty; the power to win without loss, to lose with gain; endurance, social fortitude, private self-respect; and the score more of the constituents of character. This is all a jumble, a confusion in which all the virtues and all their opposites, all light and all darkness, are visible and invisible. So it is that Europeans of forty years' residence in Japan know less of its people than the stripling who 'came out' last year. They mean that their eyes have a wider and keener perception of the chaos; of the unknowable; that they know better than the novice that it is impossible to know.

The gods of Europe, and the manes and penates of the Japan which was not Europe, in their conflict make this mystery.

You find on examination that the country is saved from the penalties of this chaos by its governing men. Under them are forty-four and a half millions of people whose minds are not made up between the old gods and the new; who, in their perplexity, worship under both

hierarchies, or under none ; who mollify their dryads with peace-offerings bought with the wages of service given to alien deities. The commercial class, for one instance, does not yet know whether to succeed with Oriental cunning or with the European strong hand and straight dealing. But the governing men know what they must do. They know that with the nation's affairs it must be the European strong hand, as far as the country is able, and European straight dealing whether the country is able or whether it isn't—this, or nothing. Therefore the strong hand and the straight dealing it is ; as witness a great navy and a formidable army, and the Alliance with England which was born in straight dealing and must prosper in it. This keeps the country right with the world—its governing men know what has to be done. They ride upon the chaos. The world sees them ; not the Japanese people. As much as is seen of this people is still chiefly a mystery.

## III

## THE METROPOLIS OF A REVOLUTION

One must needs make haste to describe Tokyo, Japan's capital—the centre of the Japanese Revolution in Being. For before the ink of one's writing is dry the description may be a reminiscence of the past, an anachronism, a memory. Your 'yesterday' of to-day may be to-morrow's 'last century' as to the streets of Tokyo; as to its architecture, its shops, its very topography, and its moats of slimy green water and their gloomy walls, cyclopean built. For one thing, Tokyo suffers from fires. In the old days the fires made a new city of it every seven years. Nowadays two hundred houses are a night's mouthful to their terrible maws. But the Municipality tries to get even with the dragon and make the future of Tokyo great by pigeon-holing the ground plan of a new Tokyo against to-morrow's fire. Tokyo's 'congested areas' are glorified there into schemes of ample avenues, which will starve the fire dragon, make the city great, and bewilder the stranger who knew Tokyo last year. Tokyo, it seems, is always in the hands of the scene-shifters. It is a dissolving view; almost a mirage, so fleeting—the hoary permanence of our English towns being considered—are the images of wood and stucco which abide for a day within its ample circuit. The founda-

tion of the city was three hundred years ago, but were it not for its moats and its tombs, one could not assure oneself that one beholds Antiquity anywhere in Tokyo.

Perhaps the best and the most is said when we say that Tokyo is typical of Japan. In this city you see the transmutation of a nation in progress. It is the centre of the whirlpool where all the flotsam and jetsam of the Old Japan—that which has no strength or plea or relevancy other than its age—is brought together and drawn down to oblivion by the centripetal force of the New. And the maelström as yet has not done a tithe of its work ; its power, its momentum, is young. Hence perhaps it is that Tokyo is more interesting in these days—certainly more curious and ridiculous—than it ever was in its past, than ever it may be in its future. The city is a lightning-change artist. It is a harlequin and a clown ; a sober City man and a hall porter ; a guy with an undertaker's pants and the scarlet doublet of a Cavalier ; it wears the features of a statesman and the hat of an Irish pedlar. And this, of course, is necessary. To transform a country in a generation is to make it ridiculous. In Tokyo you surprise the lightning-change artist when he has doffed his smock for a frock-coat, but before he has been able to discard his corduroys and his brogues. Not to be laughed at, Tokyo should be closed for alterations and repairs for twenty years. She cannot retreat to her boudoir, so the lady changes in public, and blushes withal. But the world is considerate, and we need only laugh in our sleeves.

The true impressionist picture of Japan's capital would convey that any picture—any permanent picture—is impossible, that a permanent picture will be impossible for the next twenty years, perhaps for the next

fifty or one hundred years. If this picture, which cannot be a picture, can assume the character of a humorous sketch—Hercules or Helen wearing a silk hat, and attired in a Japanese dressing-gown made in London—as an allegorical representation of present-day Tokyo it is complete.

There is a spot in a tree-lined avenue of Tokyo, from which you may see, upon the right, a French-American château (the official residence of a Minister); in front, a foreign Legation, with a Doric colonnade, embosomed among the trees of a Japanese garden; on the left, the Japanese Houses of Parliament, an indescribable huddle of plaster and timber, apparently all gables; and behind, if you turn about, a Japanese newspaper office, built to simulate an honest, stone-fronted fabric, but bewrayed by blotches like the map of Africa on the face which it shows to the Swiss-American château. All this is within a radius of a few hundred yards from your standing-place, and all the time you are within the enceinte of a castle moat of the time of our James I.

A London architect, transported per magic carpet to the Ginza, Tokyo's Cheapside, should find it every whit as good as the play. The excellent folks there would entice the stranger to traffic with them in their pretty Japanese wares, but they do not know about the street itself. They forget its excellent entertainment. Less than 50 per cent of it is now Japanese; none of it perhaps is now pure Japanese, for most of the once Japanese shops, of fired plaster and tiled roofs, have glass fronts, and counters, and doors with iron locks, all which are European. That which is not Japanese is everything else: which means that it is nothing you can classify or name. None of it is tall; Tokyo's

earthquakes will always kill the Yankee skyscraper here. There is one two-storied building in the Ginza. Its height attracts your attention from afar ; it stands up so. Tokyo, as a whole, is superficial area without height. In this Cheapside, the Ginza, there is a white-painted, square-built block, with a petty pediment flanked by towers carrying cupolas shaped after the Stamboul ellipse. This meretricious mongrel, which wears a German clock in its front and sells Japanese-European gew-gaws within, shoulders a small piece of Whitechapel, of old and rain-washed brick. Cheek by jowl with the little bit of Whitechapel is a Parisian kiosk, and next door to that you have a row of huts, or hutches, or lean-to's—what you will—of wood, of plaster, of clay, of glass, or of all—even of stone—with less than twenty feet of frontage each, and permission to be there, in the principal business street of the capital of Japan, because the Government of the land was converted to Europeanism a generation ago. But the width of the street foretells its future, and speaks of the dreams its rulers dream who were brought up to alleys, if not in them.

And, indeed, the Tokyo of the future—or its genius —is already represented in stone and lime ; not in this Ginza, the great business street, but, for the contrast's sake, no doubt, in the midst of what to the stranger seems a maze of mediæval moats, whose walls are now green and grey with moss and lichen. In the old days the demesne of the Shoguns, the acting emperors of Japan for seven hundred years with intervals, was occupied, within the enceinte of the outmost of three moats, by the residences of the tributary princes—the Daimyos. Nowadays they are building Government offices, Ministers' official residences, bureaus, and such, where

stood the halls of the lords of a lost day. These are the new Tokyo, the Tokyo of the future, the Tokyo into which the present harlequin city is being transfigured or transmuted—not without much contriving, for there is little money available in Japanese coffers even to put a respectable roof over the heads of Japanese legislators. The new Tokyo is there, however — begun, well started; as witness the Naval Department, the Judicial Department, and the Courts of Justice—three great piles in a row, which, after the rest of Tokyo, demand that you shall call them fine, and proud and noble, albeit they are in the curious Moorish-American style. They may have Turkish minarets capping a porch you might find at the door of a Fifth Avenue mansion, and no doubt brick and dressed granite do not typify the ideal in architectural colour schemes, but they are in proportion as to height, depth, and length; the granite is granite (it is so often lath and plaster in Japan); and the columns of the façade are what they are meant to be, Doric or Ionic or Corinthian; and there is space and to spare, if you want to admire from afar. This is the Tokyo of the future; this is London near Whitehall, with ampler streets; it is Paris—a little of it—where its boulevards are.

You have Japan's history figured in three stages in Tokyo—the past, the present, and the future. The present is the Ginza, inchoate, incongruous, everything at once, built for to-day; the future, its Courts of Justice — Europe definitely realised (somewhat after Japanese fashion) in stone and lime. The past is Tokyo's moats. They are a maze until you know them. In the night, with the full moon sliced into quarters on their wind-driven waters, the Feudal Age

stands before you like an Apparition. The arms of aged firs dip from the crest of the ramparts; the walls, twenty feet high, are a scowl in age-begrimed stone, the waters are green and thirty yards wide. It wants but the glint of the casques of mail-clad warriors on the walls to give the Apparition life. Even without it one dreams, and dreams, and dreams until one smiles at the juxtaposition, which you may easily find, of a modern newspaper office, streaming with electric light and humming with machine-made noise, and a feudal moat in its pristine—glory, can we, or shall we say, since Japan has sought and found new glories?

The enclosure—the enceinte—of the outermost of the system of moats which the Shoguns dug for the Emperors to fill must be near nine square miles. Chiefly there the new Tokyo is being born, but the moats and their walls must remain from day to day for years to come. The work of the Feudal Age may not be undone in an hour. So happens—so will amuse the stranger in Tokyo for another generation—this pleasant, amusing jumble—Swiss châteaux and European-American law courts, surrounded by moats of the era 900 to 1400 A.D.

Away from the generous moat-encircled piazzas, in which stately Government buildings have already risen, 'projecting' the future, and away from the city's Cheapside, which wears architectural motley and the cap and bells, Tokyo is merely a wilderness of shanties. There are suburbs, certainly, where Japanese princes and lords have built themselves pleasure-houses within queens' gardens. But let your eye sweep the horizon from the viewing-tower at Asakusa, Tokyo's Battersea Park, and you behold a level sea of low, blue-black roofs, with islands and strakes of green trees. On this

sea a great giant might walk without stepping high or turning aside anywhere save at his coming against the Government buildings and the heavy hoods of the temples.

Architecturally Tokyo is only a promise, as we Westerns would look upon it. Where it is not a promise, it is, as in its Cheapside, an entertainment. Under the walls of its moats it is a romance, something of a dream. Where it is neither a promise, nor an entertainment, nor a romance, it is a Japanese Whitechapel, inhabited, however, by people who live and speak in cleanliness and keep their children happy.

## IV

## TOKYO'S AUTOMATIC TELEPHONES

'Mi friend, who hass come back from England, hass told me that Bank of England does not use telephone. Iss that so?'

When you say, with some conscious economy of the truth, that it may be so, your young Japanese friend thinks that 'England must be ver' conservatif country.' Then he laughs, not very moderately. It is never possible to satisfy oneself as to the precise meaning of the Japanese gentleman's laugh. It is possible sometimes to say that it may mean one of three or four things: there one rests. But if he intend his laugh to be 'on' the Bank of England, or even England itself, one must reflect, being in Tokyo, that the imposition is no liberty. Tokyo seems to have said to itself: 'It's true I can't be London or New York yet awhile, but I'm hanged if I can't go one better than either of the two in telephones.' And it has gone one better; in fact it has gone a hundred and one. It isn't the poles and the wires that tell you of this ambition of Tokyo, Japan's capital. The poles and the wires are there, but they are not graphic enough. They make a cage of some thick-set streets in the city, but they don't advertise volubly. So, if you turn down the next alley to see 'real' Japanese city life, without the modern

stress, ancient, simple, industrious, unequivocal, or the other thing, belike the first note of the 'real thing' you find is a finger-post, with white letters in English which say, 'Public Automatic Telephone.' This being something other than your seeking, you sheer off to the left, with open eye, appealing for the 'real thing.' Peradventure you do find some shadowings of the Old Japan—this, even yet, being possible in Tokyo—but Nemesis awaits you in a hundred yards. You will pay toll at the next turning for your incursion into the Old Japan, for there, aloft, blatant in its legibility, limpid in literary purity, impeccable in its spelling, you have the legend, '*Public Automatic Telephone.*' Take a jinrikisha —wherein you will feel a child again, because the rikisha is a magnified perambulator, and the memory of an early sensation never quite fades—take a jinrikisha and fiercely bid the puller pull you thence—there, anywhere, away, away from the Public Automatic Telephones. If the Tokyo jinrikisha-puller understood you he would say that you were mad, for you ask the impossible. But let him hie you to a green-hedged suburb; sweet, rich, scented; shadowed by the noble cryptomeria, full, as it were, of placidity; the aroma of a leisurely simplicity environing all the little match-box dwellings. On the lintel of the rabbit-hutch police-box ahead of you, where the policemen sit as lost in an ecstasy of noon-day gossip, there they have anticipated your coming—PUBLIC AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE.

You are not to suppose that this is an exaggeration of Tokyo's telephones. Doubtless only a very earnest searcher after the 'true romance' in Japan would be alarmed by them so as to seek vain sanctuary from them in the suburbs of the city. It doesn't hurt much after all to be greeted at every street-crossing

in Tokyo by a Public Automatic Telephone even if you come to be enchanted by the virgin fragrance of unpolluted Japanese manners and customs. The fact is there nevertheless. You cannot get away from the Public Automatic Telephone in Tokyo, all in capital letters, white on a black ground, jostling the corresponding Japanese characters on the narrow finger-post. It is the King Charles's head of the city. Some autumn evenings, when the west is beaten gold, one sees from high places in Tokyo, the holiest, the incomparable among mountains, Fujiyama, eighty miles away. One has the Public Automatic Telephones always. Oftenest Fujiyama summons the vapours to veil her everlasting crown, lest men should begin to think her common. There is no eclipse, no abatement, no surcease of the Public Automatic Telephone in Tokyo's streets. It is distinctly a 'note' of the modern city.

It is one of the congruous incongruities of Japan—of the Revolution—congruous because Public Automatic Telephones are proper in their place, incongruous because it may be said for a generalisation that nobody uses them in Tokyo; also, because, when it rains—even when it is merely damp—Tokyo's principal business street is a quagmire, and because the next 'note' of the Europeanisation of Tokyo—next after the Public Automatic Telephone—is the German Beer Hall. Not German either, for the sign-board is always in English, two-foot letters—'Kyobashi Beer Hall,' 'Kanda Beer Hall,' 'Fujikawa Beer Hall,'—all along a sign-board, thirty feet long, high in the air, opposing an unabashed front to the blue empyrean.

Tokyo, architecturally, wears the motley, because it seeks to grow from a chrysalis Japanese city of the middle ages to a Paris of the twentieth century in a

generation or two. It defies the laws of Time and Evolution; whereat, not to be outdone, Time and Evolution array Tokyo in garments *pour rire*, for strangers to laugh at. So, in other traits of its corporate existence—its civic economy, so to speak—Tokyo seems to be the butt and the taunt of some great Law, dominant and masterful, which, being defied, is indignant and wreaks a subtle vengeance. Tokyo is certainly at war with Convention—with the law of the Fitness of Things, which is never satiated with homage. Therefore you find a city peppered with Automatic Telephone Boxes and German Beer Halls which yet endures with Oriental serenity a Strand, a Piccadilly, an Edgware Road, and more, which in the windy drought are Saharas and in April rains Serbonian bogs; a city which is happy with foot-pavements—where there is a pretence of such—which are maps of a hilly country with the mountain ranges in high relief, the while it plans an ambitious scheme of electric tramways; a city which in some of its public places exhibits arc-lamps of 10,000 candle-power and in others precipitates you into hospital over a heap of shingle wanting a night-light. Its contrasts and inconsistencies are delightful until they are injurious.

Something of it comes from the Japanese penchant for fads and 'crazes,' which itself is an eddy of the Revolution, something also from what is nearly the same thing, a penchant for curiosities and 'new things,' the latter perhaps inevitable, since Japan's people have been living for half a century in an atmosphere vibrating with news of the new, which is not Japanese. You are told on indubitable authority that the telephone titillates the fancy of this people from their finding in it a most excellent and curious

play-thing. So it became, as we say, a 'craze,' and now the Government, in its poverty of ready money, is two and three years behind in scoring off the list of applications for telephone 'installations.' The Beer Hall, again, reared its vulgar front all over Tokyo the night after a keen brewery company opened one for the exclusive sale of its own liquors. There is the imitation which is fashion and the imitation which is commercial competition. The one has given Tokyo its Public Automatic Telephones; the other its Beer Halls. Unfortunately nobody sets a fashion, or starts a commercial competition, in smooth foot-pavements or macadamised roads. Some day somebody may set a fashion of house-building on the model of an extended umbrella, and it may become a craze in Tokyo. One never knows.

But it would be wrong to say that Tokyo does not know how to be beautiful, simple, charming. Its European tram-cars, you may note, have been wallowing in the mud of the streets they traverse, and the car-horses, as Mark Twain would say, each swallowed a barrel last night, but there is enchantment when and where Tokyo is Japanese, without Western adulteration.

Can you doubt that these people have grasped something, or seen something, of the Beautiful and the Infinite, when you enter the noonday twilight of their pine and cedar groves at Ueno and at Shiba; the former Tokyo's Regent's Park if you like, the latter the place of Tokyo's tombs—the tombs of the Shoguns, among them two men, whose place of sepulture is not here, however, to whom Cæsar on an encounter in the realm of shades might bow without loss of dignity? Or may one affirm that this people has not tasted the mystic fruit of the marriage of Art and Nature when one

walks in the midst of their incalculable, sweet-smelling multitudes gone forth with Springtime sunsets to 'view' two miles of cherry-blossom on the banks of the Sumida, Tokyo's Thames—blossoms which, because of their size and richness, and because the green leaves are still in bud, make of each tree one vast flower-unit, a single Gargantuan bloom, rose-pink and white?

There and then Tokyo is beautiful; or when in August, at Asakusa, which will pass for Tokyo's Battersea Park, the lotus—a white-clothed being from the under-world—opens its wide benignant eye from the midst of its bed of basin leaves, whose stalks are nosed by great carp, golden and black, themselves emancipated from the business of foraging a living by the steady donations of puff-cake from visitors to the Tea-house on the lip of the pond.

There one sees Tokyo beautiful, graceful, sweet, soothing to the unrestful spirit; calm, contented, contemplative, as the Buddhas in stone which forgather there. How remote this—in time and place—from Public Automatic Telephones and Beer Halls! The mere contiguity of idea seems an outrage, something of a desecration, yet Tokyo—the Revolution—become bourgeois unto foolishness in its desire of modernity, plants a public Automatic Telephone box by the side of the Tea-house on the pond's margin!

Tokyo, it is evident, must be a bad place for poets for generations to come. But, after all, there is the whole of Japan besides, and poets, though they have often loved cities, and the 'sweet security of streets,' seldom write of them.

It is the student of Evolution who should hasten to Tokyo. He will find what surely no Evolutionist has dreamt before—that Evolution has its humorous side.



BATTLEDOOR AND SHUTTLECOCK.

## V

## MANNERS AND THE REVOLUTION

First dress; then manners and customs; thirdly ideas. Tokyo suggests the question whether this be the order of the Revolution in progress in Japan: whether these be the degrees of the process of a National Regeneration. There is architectural magnificence—a little of it—in Tokyo, adopted, imported from Europe; and one notes in the streets of the city, in the tram-cars, in the railway carriages, that perhaps one in ten of the people wears European dress. At a pretentious garden-party in Tokyo the Japanese in frock-coat and silk 'topper' may number nine in ten. In the Government offices, in the big banks, the schools, the important counting-houses, in most public employments, European dress is anything from *de rigueur* to the principal's preference. It is still sometimes the principal's indifference, never his repugnance. All this is early open to one's eyes in Tokyo. The dress reform is distinctly a 'first impression.' So, upon reflection, one concludes that social revolutions begin with externals: trousers first, Christianity afterwards; between them the Revolution will sandwich a ball to take the place of the Cha ceremonies.[1]

[1] Tremendous tea-drinking rituals, which in the Old Japan were the entertainment of the exquisite, as they still are, on occasion, their theatrical amusement.

Perhaps every tenth man in Tokyo streets wears European dress. In externals, then, Japan is apparently revolutionised to the extent of one-tenth. If the process of the revolution, its degrees, be accomplished according to some law of arithmetical progression, we may expect to find the revolution of manners and customs accomplished to the extent of one-twentieth ; of ideas one-fortieth ; and if there be anything deeper, more subtle, more peculiarly native and original than ideas,—as soul, spirit, dreams,—that element, we shall conjecture, is revolutionised in the degree of a meagre microscopic eightieth. This is a working theory which it is worth while taking into the streets of Tokyo with one's guide-book, for, to measure the progress of the revolution of manners and customs is necessarily less easy than the calculation that one in ten of the men in the streets of the Japanese capital wears European dress.

Data are available. You may note, for instance, in course of a week's perambulation of the city that once, perhaps twice, the former fashion in men's hair has appeared before your eyes—most probably in a swift vision of bulky, blocky figures with rubicund faces, whirling, in jinrikisha, round some remote sunlit corner in the maze of streets. This former fashion is the top-knot style of the dead feudal age ; there are some stubborn old men, lovers, perhaps reverers, of the manners of the old era, if not of the old era itself, who, it seems, would dam the invading tide of European manners with a levee of hair. They are perhaps one per ten thousand, except the glorious company of Japanese wrestlers, whose strength, if not in their hair, is mayhap in their manner of wearing it, which is the anachronistic top-knot. It is now seen, as you may find, scarcely once in a blue moon in Japanese streets. The male

population has its hair regularly shorn by regularly established hairdressers, most of whom, however, shave without lather and use the first finger of their left hand for shaving paper.

A shopkeeper meeting his friend, or his friend's sister, or his brother's mother-in-law in the Ginza, Tokyo, will present you an opportunity of noting the manner of greeting current in the midst of the Revolution. The two men, or the lady and the gentleman, will show their fine teeth in a broad smile while they are still a yard or two apart. They will bow—a deep, abasing curtsey, bringing their hands to their knee-caps. They will exchange a mouthful of mutual honorifics; then another mutual obeisance. They will then emphasise, with deprecatory expletives, their common unworthiness at the last meeting, and will again exchange a low, long, lingering salute. You will count the salutes, —one, two, three; then perhaps some conversation, with numbers four and five for punctuation; and finally numbers six, seven, and eight before the parting. There is no shaking of hands. For kissing—perish the immoral thought!—the Japanese reflects that, at any rate, his own fashions in immorality are infinitely to be preferred. The national fashion in greetings remains unchanged, it seems; but your English-speaking Japanese gentleman, though his embrace of the wife of his bosom is a little pat on the back, and though in the street he conducts a conversation with his Japanese friend in bows, will to you, his European friend, raise his hat with Parisian grace and simplicity, and will pass on. In its relations with itself, however, the nation as yet refuses to budge from its old, graceful, sweet-savoured, laborious fashion of greeting—even in the streets of Tokyo where a mad youth on a madder cycle

may interrupt friends to the extent of personal injury in the very crisis of one of their greetings. This very matter of cycles is of the realm of manners and customs. It is on record that the last of the Shoguns—oh, infinite pathos!—rides an American model in these his last feeble days—days whose sole light is, so to speak, a spirit-lamp of glorious memories—the memories of an inheritor of such dominion as Cæsar wielded, the sadly glorious memories of an inheritor who has lost his inheritance.[1] And if the last of the Shoguns, who in his time has ridden in panoplied palanquins with a glittering train—if he is to be found on a 1903 pattern cycle, what may be expected of the Japanese youth? One finds in the streets of Tokyo what may be expected. One finds rather more than might be expected. One finds the youth make a circus of the public street. The Japanese youth has not only adopted the cycle. He has fully qualified as a trick rider, and he performs palpably, publicly, on the streets of Tokyo—the wider streets, at any rate—for nothing. Incidentally you may hear from European friends, and many sensible Japanese, that the youth's performance is dear at the price. His specialty is riding on the hind wheel, like a horse that jibs. Our present interest in him is that he signifies the revolution of manners. The cycle is more than a manner in Japan. It is now an institution, upheld, perpetuated, by race meetings, championships of Eastern and Western and Southern Japan, tables of records and enormous crowds at the race meetings, which are held on Sundays.

These things—the cycle race meetings and their crowds—come to one's knowledge soon after one

[1] There is ample material for an epic of the Shoguns of Japan, or a high-sounding tragedy. They were the dynasty of *de facto* sovereigns which was overthrown thirty years ago by the supporters of the dynasty of the Mikados, the *de jure* rulers.

begins residence in Japan. Strictly speaking, they are not to be seen during one's first strolls in the streets of Tokyo, where, however, it is one's privilege to see many competitors training for the coming races. Had you been in Tokyo this morning you might even have seen Japanese ladies cycling — I mean that this is a manner or custom which is just beginning: born to-day, so to speak. It has to meet embattled armies of prejudices, but its triumph is probable. There is, too, an automobile depot in Tokyo. Its success is less probable. There is a stronger force than Japanese prejudice in opposition to the motor car — Japanese poverty, relative poverty at any rate.

Haulage on the streets of Tokyo, you find, is still largely human, and therefore unchanged from Adam's time. Humanity draws forty or fifty thousand rikishas in Tokyo daily, and the rikisha is the landau, victoria, phaeton, cabriolet, and *char-à-banc* of Japan. It is sometimes also the dray and the grocer's delivery van, and the European lady makes a baby-carriage of it. The real dray — commonly a sort of floor, twelve or fifteen feet long, by four or five wide, balanced on a single axle-tree—often has a boy for a horse, or a poor old woman and a boy, or an entire family,—husband, wife, and children. The haulage is human, anyhow, and, on going farther afield, far into the Japan which is unlike Tokyo in being wholly beautiful, possibly because it is untouched by the National Regeneration—there one finds the haulage just as human and horse haulage just as occasional and as decrepit as it is in Tokyo, the capital city. It may be that human haulage is an imperative necessity in Japan, not a fashion; and imperative necessities, it may be, are hard to revolutionise. Still, there are already electric tramways in the

country and a breed of pony-horses, thick in the barrel and broad in the flank, when they are fairly well fed. One hears it said, though, that that large part of the Japanese nation which is daily yoked to carriages of one kind or another, is a splendid army reserve. The rikisha-pullers exhibit, indeed, a splendid quadriceps development, and they do twenty, thirty, even fifty miles a day on a diet of rice. My present concern is with the fact, clearly apparent in the streets of Tokyo, that the revolution of manners and customs has not displaced human haulage ; that here is signified one frontier, one limit, of the Revolution.

I drop into an eating-house in Tokyo, and find, however, that the rikisha-puller and the Japanese dray-horse have learned to eat meat—even to have it cooked to a European nicety, and I reflect that there is significance as of revolution here, for the eating of meat touches a matter of origins. The killing of animals was irreligious, perhaps sacrilegious, not so long since in Japan. Nowadays there are butchers' shops in Tokyo, and eating-houses that make a specialty of their grilled steaks. The Japanese conscript from the dreamiest Arcadia of the land, where life is a round of rice and a task of garnering it, goes into barracks to tackle a meat diet by order of the Czars of the land, from whom there is no appeal. So the nation, from being a race of rice-eaters, is changing to a nation of beef-eaters, and their Buddhistic Shintoism, which forbids the taking away of life, is discredited. The Japanese become beef-eaters and Agnostics simultaneously. Their bellies turning to flesh, their minds turn to the devil. Nevertheless, even in the Ginza, the Cheapside of Tokyo, one encounters the religious enthusiast, the character of the age of palmers. It

may be man, or woman, or boy. It usually wears a huge circular hat of stout, coarse rush-straw, two and a half or three feet across, a wretched hobbledehoyish suiting of clouts, once blue calico, gathered up at the waist; a wrapping of more clouts round the legs from the feet upwards, like a soldier's puttees after a hard campaign, and sandals of straw. This enthusiast, whose hat seems built to exclude thought and imagining of the vain world, carries a stout palmer's staff and a capacious pouch slung from his girdle. The pouch will receive rice-alms, payment for blessings and prayers delivered. This dirty apparition of the crusading era tinkles a shrill little bell with a muttered accompaniment of prayer and praise anywhere in Tokyo, within hail, it may be, of the House of the Japanese Parliament. It wanders incredible leagues over Japan, expiating sins, propitiating gods, making merit for post-mortem promotion a degree onwards in the incredible progress to Nirvana. When will the Revolution reach it? Who knows? Yet, sooth to say, this apparition is scarcely of the manners and customs of the country. Properly, it is of that element which, upon the basis of the working theory of the Revolution, is as yet but moved a meagre eightieth degree from its ancient centre. Catch one such palmer, entice him to cross-examination and candid confession, and a window will be opened to you, giving upon a whole world of weird Oriental demonology, fantastic mythology, monstrous theology—opened to you, if you possess the key, with the white glare from an electric motor shop in the Ginza to illumine its shapes and freaks. Does one, then, through this window peer into the soul of Japan? Be these grinning elves and distorted goblins the true gods of Japanese devotion? Some say so,

but over the way there is an eating-house, alive with electric light, and agog with the talk of a bunch of paid members of Parliament who contemplate a 'cave' in the coming session. They are working their way through a menu of soup, meat, dessert, and the tools of their labour are not chop-sticks.

Tokyo's streets, you perceive, are a panorama of the Japanese revolution of manners, and a vision of the Soul of the Japanese Past—not all the panorama, nor all the vision, for there are the public parks, and the homes of Tokyo, to say nothing of the deep heart of the country and the deeper heart of the people.

## VI

## A JAPANESE QUESTION?

One passes from the streets of Tokyo into the parks or pleasure-grounds of the city, and thence into a home or homes of the people—one does this, and doing it makes a sort of progress or advance in the Mysteries. It is, so to speak, an initiation, with a gradation of mysteries, from the simple, the obvious, the unperplexing, towards some such fateful riddle as this: May a Nation, may a Race, forget its Origins? It is easy to read the signs in the streets of Tokyo. There is hardly a Japanese Question there. The dread interrogations which Asia sometimes put to Europe never even whisper themselves in the Ginza of Tokyo. One is merely amused there—amused by the attempted English of the shop signs, and irritated by the uneven kerb, or by the sizzling, viscous compost of the street crossings, if rain shall have lately fallen. One's mental attitude in the streets of Tokyo—upon introduction to them at any rate—is made up of good-humour, invited by a people who can be so unconsciously entertaining, of sympathy with a people so evidently struggling towards the light, of the generous commendation which the serio-comic success of their attempts so properly invites from their accomplished exemplars. We do not suspect, we do not yet even dream, that there may be

a Japanese Question. We should laugh to be asked to think of a Japanese Sphinx who should call a halt to us with riddles of life and death. One's ear takes the first vague echoes of a Question away from Tokyo's streets —in the parks, the pleasure-grounds, especially Asakusa, the Battersea Park of the city, with its perpetual fair playing chorus to its eternal tragi-comedy in wood—its temple. Asakusa is not a park. It is a temple, and its grounds—but one might say that it is the playground of the people of Tokyo where they worship, or the temple of the people where they play. At any rate it is here—in the midst of the crowds of its fair, on the steps of its prodigious temple of the Goddess of Mercy, Kwannon of innumerable hands, betokening her infinite capacity of giving—it is here that one advances a stage towards the heart of the Japanese mystery, which one never reaches. It is here that one begins to perceive that there is, or that at least there may be, a Question, a Mystery. In the streets you are amused. Here you begin to think, to reflect, perhaps to suspect. One now finds that an attitude of good-humour, of condescending sympathy, of superior commendation, is not all that the case requires. There is more here than meets the eye on the streets of Tokyo. Some whisper wanders here of the dread interrogations of Asia unto Europe—the everlasting East to the West which passes.

Chiefly perhaps it is the crowds of Asakusa, Tokyo's Battersea Park, which send Rumour afoot with a deep question for the curious stranger—the crowds and their playthings in the temple grounds; the crowds and their worships on the temple stairs, in the temple hall. To be in the midst of any Japanese crowd, even in these days of Revolution; to be a stranger from the ultimate West in the belly of a crowd of this ultimate

East; to be alone there; to be singular, to be conspicuous, to be marked,—if only because one has six inches or five more of stature than the crowd—this, of itself, is to feel, even if one has only a little imagination, that the European attitude of amused interest, benignant commendation, fatherly encouragement, is not all that the case of Japan requires; that it is far from sufficient; so far, that sometimes, as one recalls it, it seems *àpropos* of nothing, or next to nothing. Here a big 'Perhaps' insists on its importance in relation to the Revolution.

The Japanese crowd is no less an entity than the English, or the French. It is no less but rather more an entity of character, of complexity—of original emotions, original passions. Are we strangers to the French, or the French to us? Is a French crowd an amusement, an exasperation, to the Englishman; an English crowd a foolishness, a terror to the Frenchman? A Japanese crowd must be as much and more to both, inasmuch as we are of the Western fringe of Europe and they of the Eastern fringe of Asia. One finds few expressly 'friendly' signs abroad in any Japanese crowd. Individually, separately, its members may have taken a tincture of Europeanism; as a crowd they are wholly Japanese. It is rather unusual to see a Japanese in European dress in a popular gathering in Japan—assembled, that is, on a purely popular, purely Japanese occasion, such as Asakusa in Tokyo always presents. A Japanese may deem it desirable to go to business in our morning suit; he takes the evening air and his recreation in the habit of his forefathers. Conspicuous, apart, isolated, the stranger in a Japanese crowd takes it as a friendly sign to see a Japanese in a European suiting, however ill-cut, and even this sign he may not get. The Japanese crowd, as a rule, has the smile of

curiosity, of amusement, for the stranger. One scarcely sees the smile of open friendliness. One may on occasion detect the sneer of contempt and the supercilious gaze of assumed superiority; there is sometimes the oblivious eye of high disdain, the Asiatic eye that beholds incomparable visions and contemplates the abstractions which are, in Asia, the true, the pregnant, the adorable realities. Having capacity for translation —either literal or of the language of signs—one hears —this chiefly from irresponsible youth, no doubt—the jest, the jeer, the 'caustic comment' that is nearly insult. Our red hair and green eyes are the standing joke of the Japanese larrikin; they are sometimes, doubtless, a secret offence to the best of our Japanese friends. Certainly let it be said that the Japanese crowd to the stranger is never, save upon cause given, openly injurious, rarely of set purpose unmannerly. Yet let it also be said that the stranger, the susceptible stranger, often feels that the decorum of the multitude is, as it were, by official order, that it is the acceptance of an officially-prescribed line of conduct by a docile folk. There are hints in their faces, in their deportment, of deeps beyond or below the docile acceptance of the official regulation and the universal conformity thereunto.

To be sure, I have said nothing of the sweetness of the Japanese holiday crowd; of the exquisite attire of its womenfolk; of the puppet-picturesqueness of its children, whose apparel is the stolen texture of many rainbows; of the loud, enormous 'scuff,' if it be a moving crowd, of its wooden clogs upon the ground; of its friendliness towards itself; of its innate cheerfulness if left to itself.

But the crowd at Asakusa, in Tokyo, is more than

a crowd, for part, if not the whole of it, comes to worship, or more properly, to register its devotions — to pray, as well as to play. It is, therefore, by way of being a Japanese religious assembly as well as a Japanese picnic ; a bean-feast, with intervals for converse with the gods. Wherefore it happens that the Asakusa crowd is more potent to conjure a questioning in the mind of the alien beholder than any other in Tokyo— any other in all Japan. For here, around the steps of this temple of the Goddess of Mercy, in the centre of Tokyo, the centre of the country, here, as it seems, Revolution and Reaction should join in closest conflict. The spirit, the idea of the Revolution is elsewhere doubtless ; the general and staff of its forces are posted elsewhere. This is the firing line : one sees here how the battle goes ; how the present and the former things 'have at it' in mortal conflict. Kwannon, Goddess of Mercy, beholds the strangest of wars surging at her feet — the war of the Twentieth Century with the Middle Ages ; the war of Science with the Mediæval Popular Idea ; of Revolution with passive, inert Reaction.

One moves through the crowd of the fair — the crowd which plays — to the crowd of the temple — the crowd which prays. Blithely they mount the long flight of steps shadowed by the deep, dolorous temple-eaves—men, women, children ; ten in shoddy, thread-bare calico, of indigo-blue, blear brown, greasy black, to one or two in silk of grey, dove-colour, fawn, mauve; the children all pinks and vermilions and sky-blues, with a dollar-piece shaven of their crowns. One mounts the temple steps with the crowd, brushing another which, having prayed, now goes to play. One gains the top — the hall of the temple of Kwannon,

Goddess of Mercy, and one faces the altar-shrine, barred from the human crowd by a great lattice of wire. It blinks with shivering candle flames and the yellow gleam of many gilded gods. It is dark withal; tall, formidable, gloomy; threatening, yet serene; commanding, yet terribly indifferent; an embodied conscience, yet an incarnate peace. One reflects that this might be somewhat of a power, skilfully used; a fortress of Reaction, a sceptre wielding strong, stern dominion; a prodigious ally of the ministers of the former things, if so be they use it with knowledge, or even with cunning. The bent, paunchy priest, a servant of the shrine, who limps to the aid of a dying candle on the altar—does he know what power resides with him in these unique Japanese times—the times of a conflict of the ideals of East and West; of Europe and Asia; of a collision of two civilisations; he, the priest of the civilisation in possession? Is there a clue to the future of his power in the thing he does after vivifying the dying candle on the shrine? He limps to a booth to take his turn with a brother in telling the fortunes of devotees of the temple at a copper a time. Is this to use the power of the shrine with knowledge? Who knows?

The people who pray at Asakusa are an everflowing stream. The deeps of the temple roof receive the echoes of the constant clatter of the procession of their clogs on the dirty, dusty floor. The stream of them is itself a mystery—an interrogation; but their prayer is the poignant surprise. To see how this people, who amuse us in their streets, pray in their temples—these temples of the old era, the era which knew not Europe and Western gods—to see and to hear them pray before this formidable, gloomy power, is to be haled, even against one's will, to the threshold

of the truth about Japan—the truth that it is impossible to know anything accurately, fully; the truth that it is necessary to assume the inexplicable, inexplicable Asia, even in the Modern Japan. Bowed, or on their knees, their heads go down; they clap their palms thrice, or rub them slowly together with a hollow hiss—this that the god's ear may know of their presence—and an ecstatic petition for the provision of this good, or the prevention of that ill, flows from quick, living lips: the whole act preceded by the proffer of a price for the boon—the flinging of a copper, as it were, into the lap of their living god,—a monstrous chest, as big as a bed, at the feet of the shrine. All prayer is here,—the passionate prayer; the prayer that is an argument with its god; the prayer that is an accusation; the prayer that is cowardice; the prayer of cupidity; the prayer of unnatural hate. Criminals pray to their god to abet their crimes; widows to turn the hearts of their sons from evil; merchants to prosper their coming speculation in rice; lovers to seal the vows of the late tryst; men to blast their enemies. The tones of a mortal agony rise from lips that neighbour a mouth whimpering for a cent per cent profit on to-morrow's deal in preserved fish. And the gloomy, formidable shrine hears all, serene, impassive. Its candle flames shiver, and its gilded gods gleam. There is no other sign.

This spectacle, one thinks, is scarcely amusing. It is more than merely curious, grotesque, extraordinary. There is a power here—the heart of a nation and its god, known or unknown. It is not enough merely to smile or to marvel. The spectacle asks questions, or raises them for our asking. And looking around one finds the questions take the shape and character of an enigma. These people, having finished their prayer,

turn about, and while yet but moving from among the crowd of their fellow-petitioners, they smile, laugh—broadly, almost hilariously—at themselves, at anything, at nothing. The laughter of the lately-praying mingles its staccato trebles and basses with the mournful murmur of the presently-praying. And fowls and pigeons flutter and bob over the heads and among the feet of both crowds—the praying and the laughing. The cocks even crow—a clarion petition to any odd god that will list, re-echoing high among the dusty rafters. And the laughing crowd that but lately prayed, they pick up their children and run laughing to a god in wood seated in serene but maimed majesty on a pedestal to the right of the gloomy shrine. This is the god of the sick—of all the sick; the divine doctor of all ills. For cataract it is but necessary to rub his divine eye and then to rub the human organ. This conveys the cure. For aneurism of the aorta one rubs the divine chest over the divine heart, and then the human chest where the human heart beats. He is, it seems, a very popular god. He is rubbed, as it may be said, to a shadow of his first self. This is his popularity—an injurious popularity, which maims and disfigures. Having rubbed, not a lamp, but a god who is to accomplish equal magic, the laughing crowd tours the temple halls, buys its fortune ready-made at the booth of the paunchy priest, and trips lightly down into the world of vanities again—the perpetual fair in the grounds of this wonderful temple of the Goddess of Mercy. It has prayed; now it will play. It has offered sacrifice to its gods; now it is the turn of its mammon. The Question has become an enigma before one leaves the temple at Asakusa. One does not solve the enigma in the fair. It may there change to a riddle, nothing more.

The temple, its shrine, its gods, its priests, its votaries, its cocks and hens, its dust and dirt—these are all of the Old Japan; and the crowd of believers, the ardour of their prayers, the things they pray for, are earnest of the power, the prestige, the unshaken dominion, the yet inviolate empire of the gods of the Old Japan in the midst of the Japan of the Revolution. In the temple grounds the Revolution is at work. Like other revolutions it chooses strange instruments. The Japanese country cousin, who offered vows to his local hamadryad this morning before setting out for the capital, may have his photograph done 'while he waits' in these groves of Kwannon, the goddess he loves. And he is photographed 'while he waits,' and he returns to his faun-ruled Arcadia with a message of revolution. But the country cousin is more profitably astounded by the brass band he hears at Asakusa. This, indeed, is a new world! Not content with the co-operation of his ears the Japanese of town or country hears our Western music—or more commonly a screaming caricature of it—with all his mouth. He hears it at Asakusa, and seed of the Revolution is sown in his heart. The trombone rains grape-shot on the entrenchments of the embattled dryads, who have naught but wheezy incantations to reply withal. And the Revolution works upon another sense—other senses, here in Asakusa. It offers potions of potato brandy and mugs of dubious beer to the Japanese who has known only the native wine and loved it. Here, indeed, is another new world! The Revolution conquers with dreams that lurk in tankards of loaded ale. For her service she arms the furies that hover in the fumes of the brandy-butt. These sow seeds of Revolution in the head. She has other allies, other legionaries; open or disguised.

Edison's phonograph is here, claiming its crowd a yard or two away from the wide-eyed *clientèle* of a juggler of Old Japan, himself vexed at the vogue of the cheap-jack, whose ribald eloquence makes his stock of Japanese pill-panacea and imitation English soap disappear without legerdemain. There is the itinerant electric battery with beneficial shocks at a halfpenny, and in the shanty under the pine tree a skirt-dance shocks both Oriental and Occidental proprieties.

So moves the Revolution of manners in these precincts of the temple of Kwannon in Tokyo—the temple and its gods and its worship as yet impregnable, or apparently so. The silent, inscrutable power that came out of India and the visions of Sakyamuni, remains silent, inscrutable, powerful; high above the conflict, clear of the whirlpool. The people pray at Asakusa with their ancient ardour, the god of the sick is whittled away as ruthlessly as of old; he comes as speedily as ever to devotional ruin, to sacrificial dissolution. But the people are playing differently at Asakusa. They hold to their ancient worships, but concede their former entertainments. They cling to their crucifix, but give away their toys.

What does it all mean if not Enigma and a Question? They are quoted the English of the East, these people, but in Asakusa the quotation changes to an interrogation—May a Race forget its Origins? For it is chiefly a memory of the people who pray that I take away with me from Asakusa.

## VII

## THE REVOLUTION CORRUPTED

Now, though you may safely compliment your Japanese friend when he takes you to his house in suburban Azabu of Tokyo on his fine refusal to disturb the sweet simplicity of his Japanese home with the horrible discords of European 'innovations,' your Japanese friend may not respond with the aptest trope, as, 'Yes, we have defended and we will defend our hearths and homes against the Revolution.' Being a gentleman, he will not insult you through the Revolution. Besides, there is no hearth in his house, and there is no Japanese word quite equal to your 'home.' 'Yes, we do presume to make a stand upon our unworthy braziers, and by your leave we still contemptibly sit upon the floor'—the heroic trope does not gain upon adaptation to Japanese utensils and habits. There is a clear need of some happier expedient to permit your Japanese friend to say what he might justly say in response to your compliment.

For, even as the sunshine streaming in spear-grass streaks between the shanks of the high bamboo fence enclosing the house has resisted contamination, so has the Japanese house, and so also the people of it, when they are of it. It is the ancient, unadulterated sunshine of Japan, and the house is an unconquered, unyielding

stronghold, a fortress of old manners and modes. Nor does the Revolution even clamour at the doors of the house; it has failed as yet to take the bamboo fence. Even that frail, slim outwork still withstands the siege; I mean that the garden is Japanese. The little walks still constrict themselves between pretentious little mounds and wheel coquettishly to right and to left, to lure you on to a game of hide-and-seek which is all make-believe, for your eyes can follow them over and behind the mounds to their uttermost flights, fifteen, twenty long yards away. They launch recklessly upon mighty bridges of two three-foot spans, crossing mighty lakes three inches deep. And the dwarf pines on the little mounds look pertly down on the little walks, and wave a baby arm in salute to the water-lily buried to the ears in the mighty lake, like a swimmer treading water—a baby arm which may be a hundred years old, but looks a sprout of this spring. And the stalwart, unsmiling ancient, greyish on the temples with a scurf of leaden-white fungus, the stone lantern, its shaft cunningly rounded as if to simulate the entasis of a mighty burden-bearing column, stands guard under the friendly shade of the clump of young cedars, whose foliage the winds caress with a whispering but a fleeting love. Oh, yes! it is all Japanese, this garden, which plays so prettily at being a terrible land of mountains and forests, unfathomable lakes, and tracks like the inmost web of dreams.

The Revolution, you see, is swept back from the gate of the bamboo fence, and the fence itself is strong enough to resist its terrible tide. The mathematical parterres, the rectangular paths, the elliptical flower plots, the planary surface — all of the garden of Europe—have not yet entered here. There is a zone

to cross before the attack can be delivered on the house. It is the Japanese garden, and the Revolution hasn't planted a foot there yet ; scarcely, I suppose, won over the winds to carry seed of an alien flower to be sown surreptitiously, furtively, where the iris blows with its drooping lips, and the mop-headed chrysanthemum spreads its tousled magnificence in the sun's eye.

There are sufficient reasons why the assault of the Revolution on the Japanese home has hitherto failed. There are reasons sufficiently abstruse and philosophical, derivable, no doubt, from considerations and examinations of the phenomena of the Japanese character and civilisation, issuing in the affirmation of very profound and very interesting theories. I prefer to suppose that the Japanese house, and its incorruptible ally, the Japanese garden, win because unitedly they corrupt the enemy. It is impossible to think of a sustained beleaguer of the Japanese house and garden by the most hardily venomous invader. The Revolution melts before their charming solicitude. Its fierceness is first surprised, secondly assuaged, thirdly seduced. And lo ! the Revolution, infatuated, becomes an ally !

You remove your boots and you step into your Japanese friend's drawing-room through the wall. In time, with some visiting of Japanese friends in their Japanese houses, you, who have worn boots or shoes since you began to walk, may begin to look upon them with loathing. At first you are amused at a custom—you think it is a custom—which requires you to take off your boots before you enter your friend's house. You feel that for the time being you do not belong to yourself ; you give yourself into the hands of this highly diverting custom—cheerfully, laughingly, half-resignedly.

You are willing to try the experiment; you are willing to be experimented on; 'for the experience' perhaps. By and by, when you have lived a while in the country, you are irritated. It is no longer amusing; the law now seems to be not so much a law or custom, as a silly, stupid convention, maintained by Japanese pig-headed conservatism. You almost feel that you are insulted; you sympathise with your boots, and feel disposed to defend them from the recurring injury. 'Love me, love my boots,' your mood means. But there is a third stage. In the flash of a sudden inspiration, insight, original sympathy, on some clean-skied evening, when the sun's level rays fall upon the mats of your friend's drawing-room—the wall having been slid out of the way—and turn them to pure, shimmering gold, spotless as your mother's Sunday table linen,—then you loathe your boots, then you detest them, then you own a latent shame of your even entering your Japanese friend's garden with them. This, my friend, is to become a Japanese. It is to change your nation; to be naturalised; it is to see with Japanese eyes and feel with Japanese sense. When you loathe your boots there is hope of your understanding Japan. The convention, custom, law, has acquired a fourth and final character. You perceive that it is a necessity, a law—a necessity, a law of the Japanese religion of Beauty. It is also what I have already said: it is the corruption of the enemy. You were the Revolution; you are now Conservatism, Reaction if you like, Prejudice, Ignorance, Tyranny, anything save a defiler of the Japanese house, anything but a lover of your own boots!

In a measure—let me interject—it is true that to love the Japanese garden and the Japanese house is to come within the last pale of the Japanese Mystery; it

is to be competent to explore the penetralia of the shrine. A subsequent course of the ritual and worships is a denationalisation ; its end is hate, of the complexion, the figure, the gait, the dress, of your own country-women—the seal of your Japanese identity. Men have found it so : nasal Americans, high-toned Englishmen. They have lived in Japan to detest the manners of their own sisters. It is the penalty they pay ; or is it their reward ?

You have entered your friend's drawing-room through the wall. Do not expect to leave it through the floor. All that is required of you with respect to the floor is that you sit upon it and eat from it. Should you wish to go to the next room, another wall will be removed for you ; half of it will slide along the grooves in its containing beams. You may have a cushion brought you to sit upon, not because the mats are not clean enough, but possibly because their softness is not soft enough. The mats have a skin of closely-woven straw, which is packed to a thickness of an inch and a half or so. They are parallelograms, six feet by three. The room is made for the mats, not the mats for the room ; so the mats fit exactly, and you have a floor, smooth and even as a billiard table, marked by the lines of the mat borders, which are of list, or, in great houses and great temples, of figured cloth or silk.

The drawing-room is not what you have been accustomed to in drawing-rooms. It might be parlour, hall, bedroom, or even kitchen. So far as the unlearned stranger may remark there is nothing to distinguish the Japanese drawing-room from the Japanese nursery or the Japanese cock-loft, for there is nothing, or next to nothing, in it. It is, that is to say, entirely, explicitly

Japanese, even in these days of the Revolution. On the sliding walls there are monochrome cranes and carp and the outlines of craggy mountains; the ceiling is polished pine, on which the eccentric ellipses of the grain move and melt when you change your viewing point, like the figures in watered silk. You mark these features of the room easily and quickly, even as you dispose, or try to dispose, yourself comfortably on the floor. By and by you will observe the furniture of the room. You will observe a vase of chrysanthemums on a little lacquered stand, in the partial gloom of an alcove in the one permanent wall of the room. This vase is the furniture. It distinguishes the drawing-room from the kitchen and the parlour. It is Japanese, not of the Revolution. With a little education, a little progress in love of the Japanese house and the Japanese garden, even the stranger perceives that it is sufficient; that it is fit; that chairs and a sideboard would be disaster; disaster amid which Beauty, violated, would die.

The brazier—the Japanese hearth which is not a hearth—is brought, and tea in cups of the capacity of a sherry glass. It is Japanese tea—even a Minister of State serves his European visitor with the native tea, which, curiously, is pure in proportion of its resemblance to water. It is delicious when one knows it. One comes to think that Europe has not yet tasted tea.

After the brazier and the tea tray, perhaps with the latter, comes your friend's wife. It is at her coming that the inviolability of the Japanese home, its resolute defiance of the Japanese Revolution, is fully revealed to you. Your friend calls a servant, with the voice which speaks to a servant. One appears, shy, awkward, ashamed, or possibly smiling weakly, as if by order.

There are some words of Japanese from your friend. Then to you he says, 'My wife,' and the Japanese lady, late servant, your friend's wedded wife, kneels, and placing her palms on the floor, bends low until her forehead touches the floor between her palms. It is your part, of course, to do the same; yet I fancy it should be more out of European chivalry than Japanese etiquette that you do the same. This is the beginning and the end of your introduction to your friend's wife. Your friend may ask a question of her, arising out of some question of yours. For the rest she is companion to the vase in the recess. Even her silver-grey silk is in complete harmony with the room. She suits with its incomparable sweetness and its supine unobtrusiveness. The room is a study in greys—completely, charmingly successful. So is she. The room is a study which is never positive, and she is almost a negation. Herein is she wholly Japanese. The Revolution—it is a reminiscence, a dream, a murmur of a sea beyond the horizon, when your friend's wife is introduced. The wife being a soul, you do not know whether to be charmed or to be saddened, whether to admire or to regret. The room, the house, the garden; they feel nothing, and may be allowed to remain charming; they suffer nothing. But your friend's wife—to see the soul that speaks furtively from her eyes is to wish she were more of a discord; recalling the widening freedoms of your sisters beyond the seas, you are apt to desire that the Revolution may come unto her, even if her silver-grey be dyed to red by it, and herself changed to a woman. At present she is part of the theme of the room—one of the semitones of its exquisite harmony. She is companion to the painted crane on the wall.

This, then, is the Japanese Home, its outward

aspects, the appearances it presents to the new stranger. These are its clothes, some of them ; part at least of its outward seeming. Its heart is the Japanese Mystery, the Japanese Question, the locked casket of Japanese origins, which, it is believed, no disciple of European philosophies has yet opened, the casket of origins which, if you accept the burden of testimony among foreigners resident in Japan for truth, may yet one day, even now, after all the iconoclasms of a half century which has been like a millennium for revolutions, fly open and set free a cloud of furies.

Personally I believe it is more probably fairies that the casket holds. This, however, is scarcely the pertinent matter. One is chiefly puzzled to know whether the Revolution should storm the Japanese garden and the Japanese house in order to rescue the Japanese wife. When you love the Japanese garden and the Japanese house it seems a great price to pay for a wife, who, any way, cannot be your wife. It would be an inartistic war ; but it might be humanity.

## VIII

## ON THE MARGINS OF THE SOUL

THERE is the Japanese Home and there are the institutions which it harbours. Paradox being so often syllogism, chaos so often cosmos in the Japan of to-day, it might not be very surprising to find that the institutions had been revolutionised, while the house, their home, remained intact, untainted, aboriginal. In this instance, however, it is the expected—or is it the unexpected?—that happens. The institutions of the home are secure as the home itself, or more so, for while, for instance, there is or lately was a fashion of furnishing a reception room in well-to-do houses in the 'foreign style,'—that is to say, with all the decorative appurtenances of a Western drawing-room—the Japanese fashion in marriage, for example, is insulted by no temerous innovator. The Japanese lover woos and marries in the fashion of his ancestors, unblessed with revolutionary knowledge or the means of it. Here is food for thought of the sociologist. Does the Japanese lover, by his inalienable devotion to the fashion of his fathers in love, demonstrate this institution the hinge of human character, the foundation of being, the motive of life? The question seems worth some inquiry. I contribute a fact. Japan has adopted parliamentary institutions; she follows the light of the most modern science in her education; she

writes her Navy log-books in English ; but her sons make love through middlemen, and the climax of the marriage ceremony is a mutual drinking from a mutual wine-cup. It is hardest, it seems, to convert a people to a new mode in marriage. It is in the affair of love that their profoundest affections and conservatisms reside. Is this affair, then, the heart of the heart of man ?

In Japan love is an affair of diplomacy, and marriage a formal treaty of alliance. It has always been so, and it is so to-day—unequivocally and in the teeth of Revolution. Your Japanese young man, having arrived at marriageable age, inquires of his parents what arrangements they have made. They may have betrothed him while he, poor child, was still being bumped on the back of his elder sister, aged nine—children, you remember, are carried pick-a-back in Japan, and children carry them so. Engagements—some engagements—are very long in Japan ; almost as long as life itself, dating from the cradle. An infant betrothal is itself an affair of high diplomacy. But if there has been none it is still diplomacy. The young man may indeed be, as it were, his own sovereign. There is a lady he may have seen ; there may even be one with whom he is in love. But it is still diplomacy. Sovereign-like, he may have an object in his eye, but, sovereign-like, he must accomplish it through his agent—through diplomacy. His own father is his agent, or his uncle, or his sister's husband. It is altogether improper for him to be his own agent. The agent has the recognition and sanction of a title. He is the *nakodo*, meaning middleman. Through him diplomacy smoothes the way to the treaty of alliance. The young man may hint of the path the diplomacy of his agent should pursue. More often the

agent is a plenipotentiary, in whose wisdom and discretion an absolute trust is reposed. As plenipotentiary he looks about him, and a family of his acquaintance, which includes a marriageable daughter, receives a preliminary overture, or opening negotiation, from him. It is the parents who receive the overture; the marriageable daughter has only the passive importance of the territory about which the agents of real sovereigns negotiate. The parents of the young woman receiving the overture favourably, a pretty crisis comes upon the agent. He will now arrange a meeting of the parties, the young man and the young woman. Usually it is this meeting which crowns or wrecks the plenipotentiary's labours. The meeting is probably a family picnic, of the real intent of which the young man and young woman are usually informed. The meeting—it is called the 'see-meeting'—may issue in an immediate rupture of negotiations. The young man may be dissatisfied with the auguries. Of the young woman this is less likely to be so; it is hers to consent to act the intense passivity of the disputed hinterland, and she consents. Both parties satisfied, both families approving, the day is fixed without more ado. There is an exchange of presents, which is, in a sort, a solemn seal of the contract of marriage—more properly, perhaps, part of the ceremony. There is the ceremonious introduction of the bridegroom elect to the family, especially to the father, of his bride. Then there is the marriage, on a day which the family astrologer will select after spelling the stars and casting mystic horoscopes. The astrologer's importance is second only to that of the middleman, who is the presiding genius in all the solemnities. The marriage ceremony is a social ritual of which the burden is a mutual pledge in a triple draught of *sakè*, the

national wine, from a mutual cup, by bride and bridegroom.

So the Japanese lover of to-day as of yesterday loves by proxy; so is he very nearly married by proxy. And this is the Old Japan, unassailed, almost unchallenged to-day, when elsewhere you can see Revolution stalking through the land with a ruthless sword in a ruthless hand.

The same, or more, is to be said of Japan's family life in all its ramifications—of all the institutions and modes harboured by the Japanese Home, itself protected by the garden zone. Politically, philosophically, educationally, ethically, Japan hesitates from few experiments; domestically, socially, in her family order and forms, she withholds from all. Death, the final family concern under the Revolution, is death as it always was. It is cremation—except as this is forbidden by some of the native sects—it is transmigration, re-incarnation; funerals, elaborate, picturesque, ceremonious; and a strange immortality under the name of ancestor-worship. Male progeny is of paramount importance now as always, and the baby-girl is almost as little deemed an acquisition as ever she was. The rule of the head of the family, be he father or eldest son, is autocratic as of old, and filial piety shines cardinal red in the lustre of the virtues. Filial piety has immortalised some ordinary murderers in Japan; even yet it hallows forms of criminality.

In fact, upon the working theory of the Revolution this should be the sphere, these the phenomena, of the soul of the land, for it is here difficult to detect even a meagre, microscopic, one-eightieth fraction of accomplished change, of consummated revolution. The living hierarchy of deities of the Japanese hearth, and the ritual and liturgies of the worship offered them, are the

primitive, traditional, original, hierarchy, and ritual and liturgies of pre-revolution eras. Family life, domestic habitudes, in the Japan of this year are almost to the last respect the life and habitudes of the land before the great conversion. Has the land then been converted? Has there been a Revolution? Is the old man really put off, the new put on? In fine, has the Revolution touched the nation's soul? It is an invidious question.

Examine the skirt, the broiderings, the hem-stitching of the garment of the nation's soul—the nation's social as distinct from its purely family or domestic habit—and you may find some threads of Innovation, of Revision, of Change.

Take the greatest of Japanese social institutions—the bath. The bath is everything in Japan, a habit, a necessity, a luxury, a daily expense, a daily entertainment, a discipline, a dissipation. To all Japan it is as good as the play; to part of Japan it is, I am persuaded, life itself. You are told that in the country hamlet it is the one boon that makes the Japanese labourer's life worth living to him. I believe it. It is the public-house of the people, where they drink nothing but the water they incontinently gulp during the cold douche; it is the hundred-moot of the nation, for there is no class save the people in the Japanese bath-house. Popular enfranchisement is a far-off ideal in the mind of the philosophical radical of Japan. No matter: there is the bath-house; its *habitués*, who are the Japanese nation, are already a democracy. There is nothing like the Japanese public bath-house anywhere in the world. It is the only peculiar badge of the nation; it alone represents a characteristic by which the Japanese can be finally and infallibly distinguished from the other races of the earth. 'Which is the people that bathes?'

should, with a wider knowledge of Japan and the Japanese, be as plain an ethnological hint as 'Which is the nation that drinks lager?' or 'Which the race that makes bulls?' I think I have written that the Japanese people cannot be classified by national attributes. I am wrong. They are the bathers of the world.

There are between 800 and 900 public bath-houses in Tokyo, the capital. You cannot mistake them. They are, in fact, very shocking as you pass them in the dusk when their lamps are lit. You are walking along a black, stirless lane; there is the rasp and bang of the opening of a door—a sliding door, of course. A square bar of yellow light belches athwart your way, and a small babel of thick, bubbling clatter, suddenly released, strikes your ear. Of course your head turns, and there in the square whence the yellow light comes is a Doré vision to your eyes, naked legs, chests, arms, backs; whole bodies, upright, bent, crouching; legs spread like callipers, arms spread for the cross; the Laocoon, without the serpents; a corner of the innocent, naked Golden Age, all of the yellow of an outworn copper, somewhat clarified by yellow lamplight, somewhat muddled by gouts of steam expelled by a solfatara in the unseen background. And all this—there might be a score or thirty backs and pairs of legs—in the space of your bedroom. As a new stranger in the land you are terribly shocked, but you are fascinated—shocked because you are convinced that before the vision is cut off, you behold human shapes besides those of men and boys; fascinated because to you the vision is unique, unprecedented. In time you will be amused; afterwards it is nothing. To the Japanese it is nothing. In time even you yourself may have a bath there, or in some other such public bath-house of

this revealing country. You would then unrobe with the crowd, take your turn in the tank of scalding water—the unseen solfatara of your first overwhelming vision—and, coming to a shivering recovery under the succeeding cold douche, would calmly dry and re-clothe your body and limbs, and fare forth with a new interest in life—all at a cost of little more than a half-penny. I have known discreet private gentlemen of my own race who have taken their Japanese bath in the hot water tank with a Japanese family, and have come away not a penny the worse, nor a whit the wiser after it.

This, then, is the public bath-house of Tokyo—eight or nine hundred of them—save that I do not translate its debates, or try to disclose or interpret its spirit of democracy which, for the short time of his being there, levels the English-speaking Japanese to the grade of the cobbler, with the former's full consent.

In the large towns the Revolution has instituted separate baths for the separate sexes; it has also very generally caused the erection of a partition between the two departments. The partition has doors, and it need not of necessity reach to the ceiling. Hence your suspicion of figures other than male in the human phantasmagoria of your first alarming vision was probably quite correct, only these do not, here in Tokyo, climb into the bath with the others. In the provinces—in the remote towns, in the villages that live alone, where the charcoal-seller and the cartwright's assistant are public personalities—there the Revolution has erected no partition; it may scarcely yet decree a separate bath. In the simple, unsuspecting, gullible country—where no faint echo of the censorious voice

of Europe, nor any gleam of its rebuking eye, has come, where not so long since the peasant on a mountain side introduced his wife in her unadorned nakedness to the missionary from London—there the only bath-house is a tub under the eaves of the house, unsuspicion of evil the only partition, priority of use the only separation.

So the Revolution accomplishes little of change upon the face of this chiefest of Japan's social institutions.

And one finds the persistency of the nation's birth-marks elsewhere on the skin of its social body. When it leaves the bath-house the nation is one of castes which cut each other dead almost as of old. The Japanese official sees a fly on a post more readily than his poor relative hawking macaroni. He and his class are demi-gods, the rest are cheese-mites. And the mites consent. You may see them in Tokyo crawling towards a police-box, beggars of permission to exist, doffing their head-gear with a deprecatory face of humility which would doff the head which the gear covers if it might at the same time save its lips to lisp its grovelling petition. And the policeman—he inflates his little chest and consents to hear the petition, but not to see the petitioner or the public rabble which gathers to hear the purport of this invocation of the gods. And the public rabble on its part squares accounts with the old outcast class—the *Eta*, which, under the old *régime*, slaughtered cattle, removed the dead, carted away dung, and lived in their own quarter of the city, despicable, bestial, half-human. All this is officially done away; there is no *Eta* class in the order of society now; they can live where they care and make fortunes if they can.

But in the circle of the highly respectable umbrella-maker it is not forgotten against the prosperous butcher of to-day that his father and mother were *eta;* and it is a curt 'no thank you' to any proposal from the prosperous ex-eta butcher of the affiancing of his daughter to the heir of the honourable family of clog-makers in the next street.

We are here, it seems, down among the strata of the national character; among origins; we are delving in the soul of the land; at any rate we are upon its margins. The surface has been scratched by the Revolution; perhaps ploughed and prepared for a new crop. It is even possible that the subsoil has been disturbed. The new Education, newspapers, conscription, the presence and life of people of the Western nations in the land are some of the influences and examples disturbing, deranging, unsettling the old intimate hierarchy of the Japanese hearth; the gods of the mean streets of the land. These are the messengers and agents of the Revolution to the private alleys of the nation's daily walk. The national policy—the ideas and the aims of the national leaders, of the men who order and command the chaos of the Revolution—the national policy which is the Revolution itself, does not guide its scalpel round and about the integuments of the national heart, incising where disease is. The physician operates on this region rather by subcutaneous injection. The Revolution here educates, permits free expression of reactionary bile; it induces the people to give its blood for the country's service, and thereby opens its eyes to great realities. The Revolution may use the surgeon's knife to lop a national limb, but not his scalpel to convert or to cure the national heart. And is not

the Revolution wise? As operations on the heart are not yet part of the practice of chirurgery, so the reform of modes in love and marriage has not yet been brought within the principles of any recognised science of politics. Yet this is not to say that Japan may not attempt even this.



IN ARCADIAN JAPAN.

## IX

## PASSIVE REACTION

'Let us arrive at Okayama in the dusk, have something to eat there, leave for the place after dark, see It, and walk—or rikisha—back in the morning to catch the 8.30 train north. We can sleep in the train—or think.'

'Or dream,' said the Alter Ego quizzingly.

'Let us see it apart from its individuality,' I said.

'But you cannot see it apart from your individuality.'

'There is the Imagination,' I said.

'So, but even that is your own, and Scotch.'

'Well, let's see it anyway.'

We were both students of the Revolution; he, I think, without emotion. He sought to measure it, to account for it, to delimit it, to determine its scope, to map its frontiers. He liked also to dissect it. I sought to make a picture of it. To me it was an Ideal; to him a problem, political, ethical, psychological. I think I have enjoyed it most, though I have never made a finished picture of it. I doubt if he has accounted for it save to himself. Between us we were the Function of Criticism. He analysed; I looked for synthesis—for the synthesis which justifies Revolutions.

Well, we boarded our train, travelling second-class.

Next to the third it is the best of the three classes for the student. In the third you might see and hear most were it not so often necessary to put your head out of the window. In the third you are compelled to interrupt your studies of the people with a frequent scrutiny of the permanent way. The Japanese folk, you see, are prodigious travellers. It is a people which is always in motion ; on foot, by rikisha, per railway train. Tokyo maintains fifty thousand rikisha-pullers, one per thirty inhabitants. Per railway train they travel at a farthing a mile third-class. And they travel—everywhere, wherever the railway goes, on the least provocation, many old ladies to visit the chaste little tombs of their ancestors, on the brow of a green hill two, three, four provinces away, over many sunlit horizons. So it is far from comfortable travelling in the third-class carriages of Japanese railways.

The Revolution nevertheless has given to Japan railways which the people of Great Britain may expect in their country a generation hence. In Japan they have everything that we lack, and everything that we have, except speed. Perhaps British railway companies do well to concentrate their energies on speed. It may be believed that on no other condition would they be tolerable. 'If we don't make you comfortable,' they say,—to the third-class, for which their charge is a Japanese company's tariff for first-class,—'If we don't make you comfortable, at least we try to rescue you from your torture as quickly as possible. We don't keep you on the rack so long as the Ottoman railways or the Australian companies.' In Japan the railway companies make a different arrangement. 'We can't do twenty miles an hour, but then we try to make you so comfortable that the time

seems as short as a mile per minute.' This proposal is of course made especially with regard to the first-class, but it is carried out very much also with regard to the second. In England the railway traveller is in purgatory for a short time; in Japan he is confined to a finely upholstered sitting-room for a while. Thus described, the Japanese manner is much the better.

And Japan, like the rest of the world, except England, makes your railway ticket a guide to your compartment in the train. The carriages are, indeed, labelled in English, 'First,' 'Second,' 'Third,' but this is not necessary. Is your ticket green? Walk up the platform till you find a green-painted carriage. White is first-class; red, third; green, second. On occasion of hurry this arrangement is a convenience for passengers, so the Japanese railways adopt it.

Well then, we boarded our train, travelling second-class. Happily it was morning—the early forenoon. Had it been night, say after 8 P.M., we should have encountered an unpleasant, embarrassing fact about railway travelling in Japan. It is a puzzling fact in its way. I do not account for it, nor does the Alter Ego. Enter a second-class car on a Japanese railway after night has fallen and you find the Japanese race unmasked. From a race of pleasant, polite, deprecating folk they are changed to unmitigated boors. The seating runs corridor-wise along the sides of the carriage. Where forty might be accommodated, twelve or fifteen will have taken possession. A Japanese travelling by night pays for a single seat and uses three or four if he is not forestalled. All he requires is liberty to make his bed on the settee, and having taken liberty before your coming, he lies on his bed and sees you stand, or sit on an elbow rest—if this

be not appropriated for his pillow—until the train boy is induced by your vehemence to pray him, with many 'honourables,' to concede enough space for you to sit upon. So it is that in Japan you may enter a car for forty to find that less than a score have appropriated everything but the floor. This is one of the times when you do not love Japan, for there is no situation more damaging to a man's faculty of charity than that wherein you then find yourself. The facts are astounding. A nation, authenticated the most gifted of all in the graces of life, keeps you out of sitting-room for which you have paid, which they have stolen! I leave the puzzle as it stands. I don't suppose it is at all important beside the great fact of the Revolution, but it is there, for your exasperation when you travel second-class by night on a Japanese railway.

Well, then, we boarded our train. We had tea at wayside stations—tea, tea-pot, and tea-cup, all for less than a penny; tea-pot and tea-cup our possession for ever, and nothing charged for the amusement of drinking from a large-sized thimble—the cup. We saw again, as you always see in Japanese railway trains, the swollen, waddling, copper-red Japanese husband of the better trading-class which is able to travel second (first-class in Japan is a penny a mile; second, half that; third, half that again)—an Oriental Silenus, but altogether clean in person; we saw him climb into the carriage, waddle to a seat, kick off his clogs, gather up the skirts of his toga, and cross his legs tailor-fashion as he sank royally down, grunting guttural dissatisfaction at the tardiness of a little pale-faced, nervous Japanese lady who apologised for brushing my knees with her dress, as, following in his wake, she peeped out of her half-

drawn eyelids for a corner in which to efface herself. The lady was wife to the Silenus. When the Silenus would make a purchase of oranges she re-entered our little world; she came fully to life when he prepared to leave the train a station or two before we too should go. But he does not beat her at home or anywhere, they say, and he is rather a good sort when you know him. It is even said that he is undemonstrative on principle. He loves his wife, but it's none of your business, and his railway-train manner with her is said to be his way of telling you so—the application of his principle.

So we came to Okayama, a great city, in the fall of a March afternoon, cold, brisk, gusty. We left the monstrous clatter of the Japanese railway station, and declined to give our bodies into the hands of the Japanese rikisha-puller, who in the big towns is a licensed brigand who holds you for ransom under the name of his legal fare. There is a celebrated garden at Okayama, but it was not in our minds. Besides, early March is a unique time in Japan. Lamentably unique, it has no flowers. It is between the sprightly time of the pink plum-blossoms on their cerise-tinted sprays and the merry time of the rose-and-white cherry blossoms on their lichened twigs. It is long before the halcyon times of wistaria, azalea, iris, morning glory, which in Japan flourish under skies of May and June with the luscious impudence of weeds in our gardens. No, the celebrated garden of Okayama need not be in our minds in early March.

We dodged a couple of pursuing rikishas and found the upper room of an unpretentious inn. 'O Hana San,' we said to the maid, who is always smiling and is always ready to chatter, 'we will have fried fish and

an omelette—you cook such here, eh?—and—beeroo.' 'Hei!' said she, and toddled off, leaving us a great delft jar, holding glowing charcoal, and returning quickly with the tea, which is like the liberty you get in Japanese inns to sit upon the floor, in that it does not appear in the bill.

When we had eaten and drunken it was night, the sky green-blue and clear of smudge as a new-swept floor, but bejewelled with winking stars. After some questioning we caught up the road on the outskirts of the town. We left the spluttering alleys, yellow with lamplight from the open-fronted shops. Our way was towards a faint wraith of zodiacal light fading from the western heaven even at our way-going. It would disappear soon, but there were the stars.

Save for its own mountain outlines and its own narrow, rutty roads, a night walk in Japan is a night walk in England. On a plain and on one of the few wide roads it is the same at all seasons except in the tropic nights of July and August, when un-English fireflies bestreak the face of the dark with swift yellow dashes at all angles to the perpendicular of your looking. March is the March of England, and a March night is a March night of England. And night obliterates races; the earth holds them but one nation. The day, it seems, is the source of national jealousies and wars. Hence we speak of the friendly night. In the night it is God and man; in the day it is the English and the Japanese, the Russians and the Chinese.

So we found it, my friend and I, on this walk away from warm, yellow, spluttering Okayama into a green-blue Japanese night of March.

From the first we had much company besides our own, but, though feeling friendly under the stars, we

spoke to none. Moreover, we made a pace to make heat for our coats and comforters to keep for us: it was raw cold. We passed houses and hamlets where people, not already on the road, were stirring to go, like us, to see. We walked eight, nine miles, and in the last five were never, I think, out of earshot of the padding of clogged feet or the prattling of tongues. Many carried lamps, though the night was clear. The wheels of rikishas rattled an irregular clatter on their axle-trees before and behind us. Soon we became part of a stream of people in which the occupiers of the rikishas were like tree-boles in a flood. There were comments upon us, friendly, of course, as of amused wonder at our coming to see. 'Foreigners! Ha! Ha! they're coming to see!' Oh, friendly Night!

We came, to some extent, prepared by descriptions furnished us, but, nevertheless, the thing is always greater, more extraordinary, than its description. We had been in Japanese crowds before, many of them. We were told to expect this night to see a naked Japanese crowd. And now as we approached Saidaiji we perceived that we should see a Japanese crowd half of whom might be naked. It quickly became necessary to become one of the crowd, and as we recognised the necessity we began to meet the nakedness. They wore loin-cloths, indeed, but we came against the brawny flesh-pads of copper-coloured shoulders, and on occasion the press kept our eyes glued on the bed of a human spine or upon the nape of a human neck. Frequently the coppery expanse of a human back showed an irregular whitish splotch, the mark of a moxa cauterisation. So we moved, often mechanically, contributing the motive power of our legs to the united, composite, unanimous force by which a multitude, confined within

limits, moves forward to an objective. Then we were in the town, Saidaiji, nine miles of irregular country from Okayama—Saidaiji, neither town nor village, but something between ; Saidaiji, to which we had come to see an extraordinary thing.

We were in good time ; it lacked twenty minutes of midnight when we made the temple gate. I remember looking up at the unfamiliar midnight sky. The Great Bear rolled on his back twixt the North Star and the zenith. I was more used to seeing him on his feet and in his right mind at equal altitudes with his president star. The splendid individuality of Sirius shone well down the sky's western arch. I was more used to looking for him in the eastern heavens. But truly the sky was now present to neither of us ; nor did we care that a fine poetic night-wind seethed through the dense needles of the tall pines about the temple.

It was not now the heavens and God. It was man ; men ; people ; a crowd ; a mob ; a multitude ; an army ; a nation ; a race. The newspapers of the day after said there were 200,000 of them, but the Japanese mind is curiously unskilled to apprehend numerical distinctions. Fifty thousand is a great number to it ; fifty million is about the same. So there might be twenty thousand or thirty thousand, or even fifty thousand. At any rate there was a wide country-side assembled, many villages, some townships, and mobs from cities. At the temple gate it looked like the Japanese race. We were taller by half a head than the Japanese race ; so we were swimmers looking along the level of a yellow sea, yellow turned to a golden, coppery red by the flare of many lights and the radiance of many paper lanterns, —a yellow sea mottled with the black foam of coaly hair fringing the faces. Far down the feeders of the

sea—the alley-streets of the township—and upon its own wide bosom in the great temple enclosure—this with islands of temple buildings, shoals of shrubberies, and shores of tall dark firs—we might descry local eddies, obstructions, disturbances, by counting that we saw profiles and the backs of heads instead of an affronting rank of faces. Occasionally we jostled or were jostled by old men who gave us hilarious greeting when the uncommon impact caused them to look up to see our alien faces; more often it was younger men, who merely shouted louder than before.

I forget the shouting of this assembled nation. Chiefly the naked, who went in parties of from five to fifty, marching hither, thither, in the temple grounds, like mad platoons taken with a mild amock —chiefly their voices crowned the babel. In truth they moved but to have their nakedness the better defy the bitterness of the night wind of March. They shouted because, I suppose, noise is the chant of Superstition, as music, its angelic sister, is the chant of Religion. 'Yoisho! yoisho! yoisho! yoisho! yoisho! yoisho!' endlessly repeated, is, on festival occasion, the chant of Superstition, of the religion of the labourer, in Japan. The cars of temple gods are brought forth on feast nights to be tremendously heaved on the arms of Labour to the time of its tremendous lilt—'Yoi-sho! Yoi-sho! Yoi-sho!' It was this chant which crowned the babel of the night. You might say this assembled nation—the naked half of it—had gone Yoisho! meaning mad, and was heedlessly proclaiming the fact to the world in the manner of madmen.

Well, we entered the temple grounds, and for an hour lost our identities in the mass of the leviathan, the

monster whose body and limbs flowed, as it were, like a liquid mass into every channel and nook of Saidaiji, the township, and its great temple grounds. An unimagined Saurian, whose huge substance was composed of human beings, had settled upon the face of the land. We lost our identities in it, being part of it, and our voices were drowned in its chant.

An hour, and a new sound penetrated the heart of the babel. It was the roll of a drum, somewhat quick, but thick, as of an old drum. It came from the temple, and after it came a roar, a noise between a yell and an acclamation—the Saurian greeted the approach of its meal. Then the lights of the temple went out, and all others in the grounds. The Saurian put on a cloak of darkness. It was true Night again, with the starred sky overhead and the pines waving to us as if they would speak some secret. The leviathan roared again and again—for its meal—and the darkness remained.

Another hour or less, and a sudden electric thing happened. There was commotion in the temple, and a quick, thrilling, unspeakable agitation on the face of the sea of dark faces spread out before it. From an aperture in the temple front came, it seemed, a stream of projectiles, falling with a short trajectory into the human sea—two bulky projectiles or bundles, as we could see, and a shower of small ones. It was the Saurian's meal! There followed hell let loose. It was the naked half of the assembled nation which surged against the face of the temple. They were the jaws of the Saurian; they waited for the meal, and, as I say, hell was let loose when it came to them. We were not posted high enough to see well. What we first saw seemed like a cave-in of the ground beneath the feet of portions of the naked mob. Three or four men

collapsed over the objects thrown from the temple, to possess them, it seemed, and the contiguous crowd—a circular part of it, ten or fifteen deep—fell towards them and accumulated over them as if to fill up a subsidence. This appearance soon passed, and a vision of wild, whirling, wrenching, wrestling, writhing, demoniac humanity, swaying, heaving, rolling—this, the Indescribable—followed, all in the dark of the night. I retain a picture of one man—or devil. The fury of a battle swayed towards me. This man crawled from the legs of the fearful *mêlée* clenching an object with his arms. His forehead was smeared with blood. He was stark naked. His soul was in his eyes; these expressed a desperate, drunken intensity—as if all the muscular force, or body, of the man had passed into his eyes, into his soul. He leaped free of the *mêlée* towards me; then a thousand leaped on him, like water to a sudden outlet in a tank. He disappeared and I saw him no more, but I still see his face.

The indescribable went on till dawn was near.

We two—knowing the final event—took the road after an hour of it.

In a while I asked the Alter Ego what he thought of it.

'A village custom—festival if you like—tacked on to the indigenous Religion; the yule-tide of England; the Hallowe'en of Scotland.'

'But its relation to the Revolution?'

'Oh, it hasn't any. The Revolution will merely overtake it.'

'It is Reaction in its purity,' I said.

'Reaction signifies activity; this does not oppose the Revolution. It merely exists, entirely passive.'

'Who knows? It hasn't been attacked.'

'No. There is no reason why it should be attacked. It is merely picturesque.'

'To us,' I said.

'Why should it be more to them?'

'Well, it is more. The man who collars the two feet of tree-trunk clutches eternal bliss.'

'Well, let him. Why shouldn't he?'

'Well,' I asked, 'is there anything more original, more completely free from taint of the Revolution, to be seen in the country?'

'Why, yes. There are these hills.'

A grey, pearly light, hinting the dawn, had risen low, like a pale corona, over a curtain of sharp-peaked highlands in the east.

We had seen the *eyo* festival at the temple of Kwannon—Kwannon, as goddess of Mercy and all bounties, most justly hath her thousand shrines or more in the land—in Saidaiji, a small town of the province of Bizen, Central Japan. There are sacred trees near the temple. These are devoted to the uses of the festival, one per year. The tree of the festival being cut into pieces, in size varying from a chunk, two feet by eighteen inches, to a toothpick, becomes, with a priestly blessing and the efficacy of ceremonies, a precious vehicle of immortal good. The projectiles flung among the assembled Japanese nation, as we had seen, were the sacrificial tree-trunk, cut into blocks and toothpicks. Possession of them is fortune upon earth and a sweet hereafter. Hence the fury and some of the blood of battle we had seen, all in the deep, dawn-precluding dark of a March night.

You may read accounts of this ceremonial, custom, affray, riot, inferno—what you please—in Japanese newspapers of 6th March, 1901. There are 100,000

temples, or many more, in Japan. Most of them—all of them, I suppose—have their festival per year, per six months, or per three, each of its own kind and character. Perhaps the Japanese festival is really a public amusement. Anyhow, it is untouched, unchallenged, by the Revolution.

## X

## REVOLUTION HAPPILY IMPOSSIBLE

You see Japan, and you ask yourself if it be fortunate or unfortunate that a People who, in the Advance of Civilisation, have covered five hundred years by a forced march of fifty—you ask if it be fortunate or unfortunate that they have not besought their mountains, their valleys, their rivers, their seas, their plains, their days and their nights, to come with them to an equal transformation. It is wonderful—is it not? —that, in the orgy of Change which has overswept Japan, the incomparable physical loveliness of the land should emerge magnificent, majestic, wistful, winning, inspiring, incomparable, just as it was in the Feudal Age; that the balsam of its breezes should be as soft and comforting, its airs as 'vernal,' as ever (save when they are laden with stercoral odours, as, I may tell you, they are everywhere within smell of cultivation at given seasons). In their fifty years' Festival of Iconoclasms the Japanese have not injured the fair image of their country. The hands of violence have been laid on institutions, manners, customs, ideas, worships: she alone is inviolate. And the incense with which she surrounds herself, the incense that rises from the censers she swings in spring, in summer, in autumn, in winter—it is the same incense, with the same intoxicating perfume, unimproved, un-

tainted, unadulterated, by any admixture of European essences. In their passion of Experiment the Japanese fortunately have not experimented here. For once—in one direction—it appears they have recognised and bowed before the Impossible—that is to say, the Perfect.

It follows, of necessity, that there are no absurdities, no laughable juxtapositions of the ancient and modern, no paradoxes, no quixotic contrasts in what the geographers call the physical features of this country. There is no unconscious humour here. Elsewhere there is the grotesque; there is burlesque and farce. Here are the old lines of old Tragedy, the ancient rhythms of ancient Comedy. Here is Nature, which never dresses comically, which is never humorous. Here, in fact, is God, Unchangeable in the midst of Revolutions.

One lives in this country to find that the tinted photograph has achieved much misrepresentation of Japan. It is true, doubtless, but it is true with a truth so narrow that it has become untruth. Hence is it more especially true of Japan that, so to speak, one must see it in order to see it. It is more especially true if one has seen or mayhap studied the photographed Japan. It is also true if one has seen much or studied much of the native Art. I accuse the incorruptible, do I not? I impeach, it seems, that Art which of all Arts should have no interest, no motive to misrepresent—for wherefore should it paint the lily or dye the rose a deeper red? Yet neither the tinted photograph nor the native Art is Japan. Both are equally false, because equally true. They are both, that is to say, too narrowly true.

For there is a nobleness in the face of the physical Japan which has never, I think, been told. It is never told in the coloured photograph, seldom or never in the

native Art, and the Japanese dimly knowing it, if at all, have not spoken of it. Withal there is a subtle, electrical brilliance in Japanese suns—in the climate they make—which also waits to be adequately told. What the coloured photograph and the native Art tell is true about the quaintness, the oddity, the whimsicality of the nooks and crannies of Japanese mountains and seashores, though even as to this there is a qualification, the pictured or photographed oddity being more often a house, a temple, a tomb, than of Nature. If there be whimsicality, it is more the whimsicality of the Japanese than of their mountains and seas. And of their suns, it is true that they shine, but not always, nor always with the chastened, tolerable radiance which the native Art so finely speaks. There are other suns than the setting and dawning sun in Japan. There are suns that scorch and suns that shine blood-red through the rack of typhoons; there are sick suns that omen earthquakes; there are suns of the grey glooms of winter illumining the terrors of riven Alps. In fact, you find as you go along that the quality of sublimity has been forgotten or overlooked in most of the written or painted pictures of Japan. Eyes that see can see in Japan a noble stage which the current notion has hitherto conceived as merely a quaint one. To stand at the base of Fujiyama is to be shadowed by a nobler Olympus; to view a world from the lips of its crater is to feel as one might who had come to the seats of Jove. The mountains of Nikko are fitter than Helicon for abode of the Muses. The sapphire of a Japanese summer sky is deeper than the blue of the Ægean; the typhoons of these latitudes lay cities prostrate. This quality of excess, no other than sublimity, is the truth of the physical and climatic rapture of the country.

Forget then the tinted photograph and the native Art. The one falsely reports an universal quaintness, the other as falsely an universal sweetness, an exemplary and consistent grace, in the aspect and weather of this land. Forget these misrepresentations. Or, at all events, they must be qualified. We must open the door to the extremes; in other words, to the quality of sublimity. We want terror represented on this people's stage: the terror of mountains rugged and massive as the Jura Alps; we want rigour: the rigour of a winter which clothes a third of the land in Alpine snows, a winter engendering blizzards, such as that of a year or two ago, wrapping two hundred fighting men in a white death; we need the tornado and the earthquake to voice Disaster; the eternal calm of Hakone, lake unfathomable, filling unfathomable craters, to figure the deep serenity of gods, and the wide bosom of Biwa, chrysoprase sea in the lap of the land, to deny the imputation of universal minuteness. And the Inland Sea, hall of all the gems, we need to bear testimony against the exquisite narrowness and the picturesque mannerism of the native Art. For the triple crown of the Queen there should be the peerless 'Three'—Miyajima, temple in the waters; Matsushima, lagoon of a thousand islands; Ama-no-hashidate, incredible freak of sea and shore,—these for the tiara of the high priestess of the cult of Beauty.

The country, in fact, is graceful, smiling, neat, small, sentimental, quaint; but it is likewise a giant, armed with terrors, a god, familiar with the sublime, wearing the robes of his divinity, his awful front garlanded with clouds. And the climate of Japan, while it 'arranges' mornings, evenings, and twilights which, if you like, are a mute expression of the gentle love of

the Earth Mother for her children; while it paints skies with colours which, if you will, are mixed with the substance of dreams; the climate, if this gentleness and this exquisiteness be true of it, holds also—in sympathy no doubt with the land to which it is married—the secret of the thunderbolt, of the tornado, of wreck and of disaster,—the secret of power, of ultimate might.

Japan has her 'magnificent distances.' To introduce you to an example of the might of some of her shapes would be to seat you for a moment on the ridge of the Otome-toge pass in the Fujiyama-Hakone country, some eighty miles south from Tokyo. From an elevation of two or three thousand feet above sea-level you may thence look northwards across, as it were, a basin, twenty miles from lip to lip. You will be conscious of a Presence, almost as men are conscious of Death coffined in the midst of them. It is Fuji. She opposes your eye as you look northwards from the Otome-toge pass, and her opposition scarcely brooks other ideas. It is fatal to them. They are commanded to be, for the time being, dead. This mountain typifies physical Japan; it has mass, which is power; and form, which is grace. The grace has been known; the power has scarcely been interpreted. Fuji is 12,300 odd feet high. This is its mass, its power. For its form, as you see it from your perch in the pass, it seems absurd to regard it as an accident of Nature, so you think and speak of the mountain as a work of Art from the hand of Nature. You will find, if you care, that the country folk who dwell in the shadow do more than this, that they speak of 'Him'; as that 'He' threw off his mists at ten o'clock this forenoon; that there was a snowstorm

round 'His' summit last night; that 'He' was very handsome all day Thursday of last week. So will you think, albeit perhaps you do not speak. You will think, beauty being feminine with you: This Lady has majesty; might is upon her brow; dreams of the Infinite are woven with the texture of the chaplet she wears; she is extraordinary, imperial, a queen, a goddess. And you will say if you have beheld the Infinite in horizons: They do well to hold this mountain sacred. For the Japanese have anticipated the worship of a world. Fuji long since was apotheosised among them.

Here, in fine, is the quality of greatness, of splendour, dignity, divinity, to conjure such imperial imaginings as mark the borderland of the Infinite. And in this sense there are many Fujis in Japan. From this very Otome-toge pass if you but face southwards you will see, twenty, thirty miles away, unfathomable Hakone, serene, silent with awful depth, remote as ancient history, dreamful as the future, romantic—if you know the national records—stern, mysterious, repulsive, sirenian—anything but quaint, odd, grotesque. Or come with me to Nara, of all Japanese cities the city of that living death, the Past. From her sheltering hills you may view the breadth and length of Yamato province, cradle of the race of the country, burial-place of its Cæsars, contemporaries of the Roman Julius and the Macedonian Alexander, theatre of its earliest valours, repository of its dimmest traditions, place of the first gallantries of its first lords and ladies. In this city emperors and empresses fondled poets and made vows to priests while England was yet a heptarchy, and Norsemen and Danes insulted our shores. The somnolent

chaunting of tonsured priests wanders along its aisles of immemorial cedars, as if in search of the echoes of the litanies sung here in the year One. There was the pomp of courts here in the time of our Venerable Bede. And tombs, trees, and temples remain of that time and pomp, giving us here the quality of venerable dignity, hoary antiquity. In fine, there are here landscapes and groves, meadows and hills, and temple courts which are anything but comical—anything but quaint, odd, grotesque.

You may walk scarcely a mile of Japanese country—even including its two-thirds proportion of mountains—without encountering some oddment of Antiquity,—a wayside shrine where palmers of the time of Peter the Hermit deprecated the displeasure of the deity of the adjacent wood, as do their children's children of the twentieth generation to-day; a mediæval castle, with corner bastions and connecting curtains mirrored in a sedgy moat; the tomb of a hero of the chivalric age; a temple, whose records, if you could read them, would transport you to times when Rome was yet an empire, if a divided one.

You find, in fact, that Japan—Japanese scenery—has a wealth of the dignity which accrues from 'associations' and the visible stone and lime, or wooden, memorials of Antiquity. It is, in fact, anything but quaint—or, at the worst, it is much more than quaint—if you behold with true eyes. From Nature it has grace, but it has also nobleness; from the hands of men it has quaint roofs, but from history it has infinite dignity and that quality of Antiquity which is a kind of nobleness.

The country's weather is a faithful register of meteorological extremes. When it rains it always

pours ; when it shines there is never a cloud in the sky. Thus it happens that though two feet more of rain fall in Japan per year than in England, Japan has a wealth against our poverty of days of sunshine. Japanese weather nearly always contrives to be 'interesting,' and I have an aphorism in two clauses to describe the difference betwixt the English climate and the Japanese. It is this : In England Summer is never out of the grip of Winter ; in Japan Winter is never out of the grip of Summer.

And you shall conclude that the Japanese people have received a splendid stage on which to play their Tragi-comedy in the drama of modern History ; that if Greece had not been great without her Olympus, Japan has her more than Olympian Fujisan ; that if the Sun be the Mistress of Beauty, Japan should give us Grecian gifts ; that if Snow be a fine national discipline, or if Imagination love to bask in heat, the people of this land should be the Greeks of the age. In short, the Japanese can never have a jot or tittle of a case against Latitude, as we may have, or the Laplanders.

## XI

## THE SYNTHETIC IN PLEASURES

LET it not be said that the Japanese in this year of their New Age of grace take their pleasures madly as the French, with whom they are compared when the comparison is not with the British, or the Chinese, or the wild men of Borneo. The Japanese theatre party, having had early breakfast, goes to the play at 10 A.M. and may leave at 7 P.M. if the play flags, but at 9 if the climax of the drama is artistically managed. The party will have lunched or dined, taken afternoon tea (for tea purposes the day is 'always afternoon' in Japan) and suppered, the while the drama was unfolding. Sometimes—such is the manner of some of their plays—the party must go home to bed and return at the same hour on the morrow and, again provisioned for the day, remain to the same hour in the evening if it would see and hear the full *dénouement* of the piece. Indeed, there are pieces whose concatenate marvels consume a week of days in the unwinding, and, more wonderful still, there are folks in Japan who see them. These do not take beds with them to the play, but the fact is—the circumstances render the fact obvious—provision has to be made and taken by the Japanese theatre party for nearly everything except sleep. There are rugs and cushions to mitigate the comparative hard-

ness and relative uncleanness of the floor mats, which are of straw and stuffing ; there will be basketed meals, with utensils and flavouring and sauces and spices to match ; there will be tobacco and pipes for the elders of the party, ladies and gents, and the female servants of the house will be there to stop all the little crevices in the armour of the party's peace and comfort with the sweets of Japanese tendance, which is exquisite. Tea in pots at a ha'penny or less a time will be hawked throughout the theatre in the entr'actes, with bon-bons and bon-mots ; or the fibre of a substantial meal, if that be desired. So the party will pass the day and part of the night, viewing buskined Tragedy and mincing Comedy surrounded by every home comfort. Thus may it truly be said that the beauties of the national drama are brought home to every Japanese. So may it not be said that the nation takes its pleasures madly.

Herein, in fact, as in some other matters of moment, Japan has as yet declined to admit that Europe is right. In many things the example of Europe has been law, but Japan refuses to take her pleasures in a hurry. She may go so far as to admit that expedition is desirable in business ; she goes further : she attempts to practise it there. But in her pleasures the old mode commends itself still. She will not have compression ; she will not take her happiness in pilules of concentrated strength as is our increasing aptitude. She goes to the play at 10 A.M., and comes away when the shadows of evening have lengthened into night. She is fully content to be skewered on the spit of a lingering dramatic excitement for a week, with intervals for sleep. It all goes to show how dear is the art of pleasure, how fundamental the habit. 'You may take away our politics, our art, our

religion ; you may even upset our family order,' Japan says, 'but leave us our pleasures ; you shall still permit us to take these in our own way. There will else be blood.' The national amusement is, it seems, a last intrenchment, a last ditch, of the forces of conservatism. It is not that Japan is unwilling to be amused in our way—the European way. Nor is it that she refuses to be interested in our contrivances of entertainment. On occasion a far-strolling company of Anglo-Saxon players—they come usually from America or Australia—tours the Japanese provinces and succeeds well in tickling the indigenous fancy with the exotic drama ; and I have seen Japanese gentlemen hang out the signs of enjoyment—they are polite dissimulators it is true—during a post-prandial programme of speech and song, comic and pathetic, represented or 'sustained' by European amateurs.

Yet let us not take the Japanese for traitors, who lack a single redeeming constancy. I fear it is too true that their attachment to the drama—and the pleasures at large—of their own soil is as passionate when they see the vapidity of what we have to offer them in this kind as is ours to our modes when we discover the insipidity of that which they would provide for us. We shall say, each to each, with all mutual respect, 'You divert yourselves well and heartily, but your enjoyment is infantile and contemptible.'

There are people who say, in effect, that in Japan life itself is one lifelong holiday, and this mayhap is the reason why the Japanese go to the play at 10 A.M. and leave at 9 P.M. Having the span of life to pleasure in it is hardly to be expected that the Japanese should take their pleasures madly. But then it is not true that Joy holds perpetual empire in Japan. Misery hath her

alternate dominion there as here ; and hearts are broken as easily, though perhaps not so frequently. The national drama dresses as many of its figures in the habiliments of woe as does ours—though it be a different woe—and it is a usual thing for Japanese maids to come home from the play and sob their little eyes out from sheer sympathy with the sorrows and trials of the play-actor hero.

It comes to this, in fact, that this people in the matter of their amusements succeed in this, that they make a better bargain with Woe than we do, and this because they are willing to compromise matters by accepting less than we ask, and by making more of what they get when they get it. Such, I am persuaded, is the explanation of their undoubtedly more successful adoption and application of the hedonistic philosophy, though they don't know it by this name.

Consider their meagre tale of organised Pleasures—their theatres where the plays are plays without plots ; their excursions to view February plum-trees, April cherry blossoms, and autumnal maples and chrysanthemums, costing nothing, or a railway fare at a farthing a mile ; their festival days, at the price of the day's exposure of their *fête*-day dress, and—well, this is practically the list, saving mention of the well-spring of joy and content in their hearts, from which they water the seeds given them of Pan, reaping a richer harvest than we, who make of Pleasure a high and holy business, and reap dividends from it, persuaded that these are of the currency of Happiness.

Consider how much they find in the apparent little of their plays and their performance. It is so little, it seems, that they are fain to supplement the lack of plot with junketings as of a family feast, with a dissipation

of gossip with the friends new or old they will find or make in the next 'box.' With us the play is a pleasure of selfishness which we mingle, if we can, with the pleasure of a purchased conspicuousness in the guinea boxes. The play with them induces an accompanying ebullition of goodwill and kindliness such as we reserve for our bean-feasts and picnics. We demand a play with a plot that shall absorb us—'hold' us, as it is said, 'from start to finish.' They ask a sort of dramatic accompaniment to the perpetual song of content they sing in their heart to the time of its beats. Their play is a sort of social meeting, with a murder, a *combat à outrance*, the penultimate of an amour, a sword dance, 'happening' on the stage according to the hour they happen to drop in. The murder, the death-combat, the amour, the dance, appear on the bill of the play as a dramatic unity, but the principle or principles of unity are chiefly understood, or taken for granted. Consider this *précis* of the plot of an acted play :—

There is a famous Bearded Knight of old. He is a retainer of the proud and powerful house of Takeda, whose forces of the Feudal Era are led by Katsuyori, a foolish youth. The generals of the house sacrifice their better judgment to their loyalty and agree with much foreboding of evil to meet in battle the combined forces of Nobunaga and Iyeyasu (two leaders of genius in Japan's Middle Ages). The Bearded Knight stalks upon the scene as this resolution is taken and groans with despair. The forces of the house of Takeda are defeated and Katsuyori falls upon his sword. In the battle the Bearded Knight meets a young warrior, Kotaro, of the enemy's side, whom he admonishes to refrain from provoking a fight. The foolhardy stripling will fight, and the Bearded Knight kills him by accident.

The Bearded Knight is then baffled in an attempt to assassinate Iyeyasu, and is made prisoner. Recounting his adventures when captive he chances to tell of the fatal scuffle with the lad Kotaro, a sister of whom overhears the narrative of Kotaro's fate. The sister brings a dagger to have vengeance of the Bearded Knight for her brother's death. The latter explains the accident of which he was the victim in killing Kotaro, and with this explanation wins the sister's regard, who helps him to escape. *Tableau!*

A high-water mark of plot is reached in such other warp and woof of Japanese dramatic fancy as this :—

The hero is one Asahina, and the heroine a beautiful lady, Matsushima by name. The latter is a ward of honour in the court of the emperor. She is on the point of being 'possessed' by a villain, Tomotoki, when Asahina chivalrously rescues her. In recognition of the gallantry of Asahina the emperor awards him the lady in marriage, and as Asahina had for long been enamoured of the maid, he is willing. But the mother of the emperor wishes the girl to marry her nephew, who is no other than the knave Tomotoki. Unable to offer flat-footed opposition to the designs of the Imperial mother the maid Matsushima kills herself, leaving a letter of regret for the true one, Asahina. *Tableau!*

Conceive, as you may, that a people imbued with the art instinct, ingenious, of a high spirit, quick-witted, are content with this for drama, and you will perceive that they must be careful economists to succeed so well in being so much more happy with what they have received—of drama at all events—than we with what we have invented. Perhaps this is an inverted view of the facts, for, plot or no plot, the Japanese drama is always thumpingly transpontine, and most often lavishly

licentious (but the license is not our license), as indeed may be perceived through the synoptical gauze of the sketch outlines I have given. The stage is always occupied with 'terrible business' or preparing for it—villainy, *mêlée*, suicide, murder, with all their lurid properties and appurtenances. The 'time' is always the heroic age of Japan, which is our Queen Bess's era, more particularly; and for 'scene' the Hamlet has no Prince of Denmark that has no battle, or its eve, or its morrow. So, for excitements and alarums the Japanese playgoer is well enough off. But the sum of the matter, the point of the point of view I am stating, is this: that he, the Japanese playgoer, need never wait to the end of the act—although needless to say his politeness usually waits—to go out to see a man, as we say. The Japanese play is, in fact, clearly an amusement, very closely resembling in general effect our own variety show. It is never an intellectual effort, never an emotional strain, never a didactic in scarlet, never a philosophical dissertation, never a preachment on the Nemesis of Heredity. Thought is never associated with the Japanese drama, still less is conscience, or the faculty of ratiocination. The playgoer is amply content with amusement for his money. Accordingly he is amused, as his forebears have been since Japanese drama began, which was with the peep of their History's dawn.

It is largely so with the other pleasures of this people. Yet if they do not engage their intellect to minister to their pleasures, as we try to do, they have trained the negative faculty of intellection, so to speak, to be handmaiden to their enjoyments. I mean that the Japanese contemplate more and so much more successfully than we do. If we know or have learned

how to brew the intoxication of unrest, they know or have learned where to find and how to sip the honey of peace. The art of Contemplation is long since dead with us. In Japan it is still the crown of all pleasures.

And where they win upon us is in the inexpensiveness, physical and psychical, of this manner of pleasure. There is no wear and tear of mind, soul, conscience, spirit, from their drama, and their contemplation of plum-buds, cherry blossoms, maple leaves, and chrysanthemum gardens costs no more, as I have said, than a halfpenny per mile or less on the railway. I would have Europe and America — the latter as soon as possible — go to school in the art of Contemplation with a Japanese *sakura-no-hana* (meaning cherry-blossom) party. They will dress them in the tastefullest of tints: the father in the black or drab or coffee-brown of dignity; the mother in the silver-grey of conspicuous modesty; the children in the motley pink and red and white and blue and saffron of that which exists to please. The April sky will bear on its sapphire concavity here and there a frosty breathing of cirrus, pale primrose scrolls, carnation volutes and angels' wings of diaphanous gold. The air will be tepid with the warmth which has enticed the lately prisoned buds into coquettish bloom. The party will walk or train to the 'viewing,' merrily and with laughing greeting for all the world, even for the foreigner with his discordant dress and unlovely red hair. The mind of the party from the time of its setting out is an increasing calm, a preparatory fast, a smoothing of the way for the coming of the cherub Contemplation. And the cherub will duly give his votaries welcome at the limits of the cherry grove, avenue, park, which in the distance is a conflagration in pink without

smoke. Within the sweet, odorous umbrage of a blossom Wonder which may not be described the party will give possession to the cherub. They will, in fact, contemplate—walking, sitting, eating, drinking, even dancing, as if to test the fittest sensation to accompany the cherubic possession. They will be units in a thousand, two thousand, three, four thousand, five, who also all are contemplating. It may be morning, it may be afternoon, it may be evening—it is probably evening. The moon may appear before the party's going, and the stranger may dream that he has entered the Elysian fields. He does not dream that the small, quiet Japanese gentleman in black, scuffling at his side, the ecstasy of his features obscured by the double twilight under the tree-flowers, is there in verity. So might I write, more so might I write, of the 'viewing' of the maple leaves in Autumn, when Contemplation, now become Worship, shall have flown to a hillside or a hollow of trees foliaged in tints from blood-red through all the intermediate shades to the yellow of old gold.

You perceive what these people accomplish in the economy of Pleasure? Their lusty youth, it may be admitted, now find enjoyment in sport imported by the Revolution — in baseball, in cycling, in lawn-tennis. The ladies ten, fifteen, years ago bought our ball dresses and went to balls to dance, but now they wear their own grace in silks again, with which they come to look on and to adorn. The native taste in pleasure, despite these signs, is deep-rooted in its own origins, and revolution has scarcely shaken it. Nor will it for long, perhaps for ever.

Let us be just. Let us admit that of two secrets, two phases of the doctrine of hedonism, the Japanese know one, and we the other. To them is the pleasure

of synthesis, to us the pleasure of analysis. Ours is the fierce joy of strife; theirs the calm content of concord. We rejoice in examination, they in contemplation. We are subjective, they objective. And the vital moral of the story is this, that if the subjective —analysis—stimulate that which is already strong, it weakens that which is already weak; whereas, is not the objective in pleasure—the art of contemplation—synthesis—always constructive? So you find everybody in Japan, under ordinary conditions, happy, and nobody the worse of his happiness. You look in vain for a workhouse in the land. There is an equal distribution, a fair sharing, of the riches of happiness. With us there are appalling extremes. With us half who drink from the cup are poisoned. Hence doubtless arose the saying that we take our pleasures sadly.

## XII

## PARTING OF THE WAYS

More than once while you are in Japan you may ask yourself if there has been any Revolution, whether any is in progress. Repetition of the question depends upon the length of your stay and the scope and direction of your study of the Revolution. There are also questions of temperament, of the history sense, of the capacity for generalisations; and there is the verdict of personal experience. This last is often predominant in the note and tone of a general estimate. What all of us lack is the Japanese point of view; or, if you like, the Asiatic, the Oriental consciousness. This we lack, and must lack because, it seems, there are differences in the fundamentals of being. To estimate the Revolution justly it is necessary to be two persons, to be a dual personality, to be derived of two races, and yet not to be a cross, or mixture, of both. The Oriental consciousness is necessary in its wholeness, with the European ancestry which you, I, already possess.

So the question which more than once you put to yourself about the state of affairs in Japan while you are there is only half a question. Half of it is lack of the Oriental, the Japanese consciousness. When you supply this lack of the Japanese consciousness with

some knowledge of Japanese history, the question, though it may still on occasion rise to your lips, usually remains there. Your lips keep it; they lock upon it; and you put it away back in the secret repositories of your European ancestry, where it moves fitfully, like the unborn child, as the grand masque of the Revolution moves before your eyes.

A great man—a great spirit—of Japan's Revolution, dead two years ago, used to tell a story which is an epitome of the Japanese achievement. When he was a young man and a two-sworded samurai of the Feudal Age, he made a journey into the country. In his journey he met a farmer who, upon the instant of his observing the samurai, jumped from the horse he was riding. 'Why do you do this?' the other asked. 'I only wish to be pardoned,' the farmer said. 'For what?' asked the other again. 'Is this not your own horse?' 'Yes, sir.' 'What harm is there, then, in riding upon it? Mount it again immediately.' But it was only upon threat of a sword-thrust that the feudal farmer consented to mount in the feudal samurai's presence.

This 'Then' of the Japan of four decades ago, opposed to the 'Now' of your visit in 1904, is a descriptive antithesis which is also a fair epitome, a good bird's-eye view, of the Japanese achievement. Lacking the Japanese consciousness you, if you would realise the miracle of Japan's Modern Era, should but have lived under Japan's Feudal Era, thirty-five years ago or so.

There is a deceiving face of things in Japan. The land is a land of deceptions, and one of the subtlest, perhaps because it is one that is least intended, is its mask of manners and customs. You land at

Yokohama and you gravely note that babies are still carried pickaback, perhaps on the very quay of your first landing. You stroll into the native town, and in your first glimpse of Japanese interiors you observe that the race still squats tailor-fashion on the floor to its meals, or upon its heels, frog-fashion, when in a leisure evening hour it would contemplate the pageant of the street from the flagstones of its own threshold. With the adventurous spirit of the explorer you give a share of your first rich, eager hours to a tea-house, where, if you 'touch' the 'real thing'—not easily possible, indeed, in Yokohama—you find that the Japanese race still furnishes its sitting and dining-rooms most charmingly with nothing; that the walls are still chiefly paper and the floor the only table. In Yokohama, indeed, you may not know how easily you are recognised for a stranger, nor with how smooth and innocent a relish you are taken in at your first tea-house, and by your first, second, and third jinrikisha-man. And even did you know so much, it is doubtful if you should jot the facts down in opposition or by way of counterpoise to the pickaback infant and the paper walls. It is debatable if they be not of the same category as evidence. You may scarcely at once put it down so—'Against the aboriginal habit of sitting upon the heels I note a European proficiency in the art of fleecing the stranger.' It is not yet time—you do not yet know enough—to decide that the art is certain evidence of the progress of modern ideas, and the habit an instance of the immobility of the former things.

You go on; you add to your observations. You go to Tokyo, and though mayhap you visit a Cabinet Minister in the palatial house of the Department of

Commerce and Agriculture, and from him and the palace of his Department receive an illuminative impression of the reality of the Revolution, there is a crowded procession of deceiving appearances — the mask of manners and customs. You visit your Japanese friend in his home, and you see and hear about the Japanese wife. You dig in the subsoil of the popular Idea, and you strike an underground system of astrologic and necromantic shelters to which, upon domestic crises, the people still retreat as by instinct of a fearful faith. You visit ancient temples and behold them alive and quivering with the throb of the convulsive prayer of a thousand believers per day. You note the permanence of the people's ancient habits of pleasure, you mingle with the crowds of a festival which has a history of a thousand years, which has its hundred thousand prototype feasts throughout the land, served by a hundred thousand dedicated priests who hold in leash the prodigious power of a hundred thousand gods and goblins.

You will find, as your investigations proceed, that the country, the people, are loyal even to their ancient vices. The widespread fame of the Yoshiwara will have reached you long before you land at Yokohama. If not before, you will sniff its disgusting fragrance in the oily aroma of the first engineer's first chat on your Japan-bound steamer. Colloguing with the initiated in the first week of your Japanese visit, you hear much about the Yoshiwara; so much that, without judgment, you might imagine that Japan is chiefly Yoshiwara; that the Yoshiwara is Japan. Of course it isn't so; nothing is at bottom less true than the fool-story about the Japanese Yoshiwara that has been bruited to the ends of the earth; the story that it is Japan, that

Japan is the Yoshiwara. All that need be said about it is that it ranks, or appears to rank, in point of immobility, with the Japanese temple festival. You will find it so. It is part of the mask of manners and customs. To-day, to-night, the 'quarter' in Tokyo and most of the great cities is as brilliantly illuminated, as garishly gilded, as gorgeously attired, as cunningly rouged, as pretty, as picturesque, almost as profitable, as ever. Its vice to-day is often as virtuous as of old, its dividends—it is often a company concern—as atrocious an insult to the body and soul of Woman as the assignations of Tottenham Court Road. 'Tragedies of the Yoshiwara' are a common chronicle of the twentieth-century newspapers of Japan, even as they are the commonest theme of Japanese romantic literature and drama of the old era. To-day a daughter enters the Yoshiwara to give her father bread, or peradventure to keep her widowed mother from penury. The fabric of this institution of hideous vice is often, as of old, raised upon a foundation of heroic virtue; divine sacrifice is often here linked as of old to a form of selfishness which must be the moral law of hell. Just the other day the sublime victim was still a slave, whose hope of freedom was her loss of the power to attract; but the Revolution yesterday decided that in Tokyo, at least, she is entitled by law to walk off with her own body when she pleases—to leave the quarter, that is.[1]

Well, it is the mask of ancient manners and customs, and, if you will, of vices. As such it is a deception. You are deceived if you conclude from it that there has been no Revolution; that there is no Revolution in

[1] This, let it be said to its honour, has been achieved mainly through the boisterous but effective instrumentality of the Salvation Army in Japan.

progress to-day. Read my story of the feudal farmer and the feudal samurai of thirty-five years ago. It is a first lesson in the Revolution, elementary, easily grasped, and strictly true. Daimyo, name of terror and of the wielder of powers of life and death in the Japan of 1870, is in these days a synonym for 'fool' in the mouths of the people, and he has, of course, utterly disappeared. This also is a simple, graphic object-lesson. There is no Daimyo, even by name; there are no samurai, save when the ancestry of some highly-placed official is in question. They disappeared when the Feudal Age was closed by Imperial Decree in 1871. You think this is but little, you in England, where Feudalism still hunts foxes, carries elections, and proscribes faiths! Japan, in truth, is at a further remove from the Feudal Age than England. This is the Revolution, accomplishing in thirty years more than British progress in three hundred! Is there not, then, a Revolution?

The truth is, the mask of old manners and customs and vices which Japan, the Revolution, wears is one of the subtle deceptions of a land of deceptions—some of them, as this one, unconscious, unintended deceptions. Judge of the land and its people by its salutations, by its house furniture, its gods of the hearth, its love-making, its prayers, its tales of mean streets; judge of it so, and there is no New Age in Japan, no Upheaval, no sacred Revolution.

But then look higher, look farther, look wider, and also ask yourself if a revolution of manners and customs, or even of vices, be absolutely necessary.

Look back thirty years and see the Feudal Age, when a man was a piece of goods or an animal; look around in the Japan of to-day and see him a man, or getting to be one.

The Revolution is nothing like complete, howsoever you look at it, and it may be that a large revision of manners and vices is part of its proper work. Yet already it has recorded radiant, admirable achievements which the seeming—it is often seeming—immobility of the daily habit of the people hides, for your deception. It has, as I say, made of a piece of goods a man, or at the worst a manikin. Is this not much? Is it less than the creation of a soul, a miracle namely, for that this, among us, is a supernatural achievement, the work of God? It is no less, I think.

Let us agree that the great work is only half complete, or less. Let us agree if only because the Japanese Emperor says so. In a Rescript of a few months back, addressed to Marquis Ito upon a grave affair, the Japanese Emperor says, 'The work consequent on the Restoration has been carried half-way towards completion, but the end is still far distant.' I will put it differently, yet perhaps similarly: 'Japan's Revolution has made of a piece of goods a man; of a toy it has not yet made a woman.' It is a mode of expression, my mode, not the Japanese Emperor's, which, however, is much to the same effect.

With greater license of rhetoric I would say that behind the mask of ancient manners there is a nation of the East, a race of Asia, whose eyes, while they but yesterday, historically speaking, looked towards the dark and death, to-day lift upon the light and life. It is a change of direction that has taken place; it is a new course that is steered. The former way was the path of destruction; the new is the way of life.

For the Revolution, having made the man, has to feed and nurture him as a man; there is a new chart needed for the new seas, the new coasts, towards which

the new course lies. There is a reorganised, a re-created Educational System, with Science for a soul; there is Modern Industry and Commerce, formerly contemptible or non-existent, now the foundation of the State; there is a shape of Representative Government, Parliamentary Institutions, the highest, the supreme attempt of the Revolution, and therefore—the end being yet 'far distant'—its least successful, sometimes most amusing attempt.

Of this—the food of the man of the Revolution, late chattel of the Feudal Age, the house of his new-born soul—some part is great, some part ludicrous, some part merely foolish. It hardly possesses all the interest of the mask of manners. Stupendous issues, nevertheless, turn upon its future, rendering it almost, I think, a concern of Mankind.

## XIII

## IN THE MACHINE SHOP

An American of my acquaintance, who has done rather big things in a great industry in his own country, who knows what's what in the science of applied mechanics, and can rebuke a turner in an engineering shop for taking his eyes off his lathe when he oughtn't, came to Japan expecting, he confessed to me, to find a people whose inborn faculty for making things, and ability to make them at a prime cost to give United States employers 'fits,' prophesied the day of their early appearance upon the world's stage as a producing and manufacturing competitor of the New World—and of the Old, had not the Old, in my friend's view, already been kicked off the stage by the New. My friend beheld the new Yellow Peril—the Peril with a chisel for a sword, and a steam-hammer for a forty-pounder. 'They eat rice,' said he, 'and if they can turn shafting and forge cranks on rice, guess they'll beat us and the rest.'

This gentleman from Indiana spent six or eight months in the country, saw a big job through a Japanese engineering shop, sized up with keen grey eyes the men who put it through, and pottered about among the fitters, turners, moulders, draughtsmen,

wrights, and rouseabouts the while he was seeing the job through. At the end he left Japan with a serene mind; he was even happy. The Peril had gone away; disappeared; a substantial fear had become a thing to laugh at. 'Yep,' said the American, 'Japan may compete with the United States as a manufacturer in two hundred years, but you don't find me worrying 'bout that.' He would go into all the minutiæ of the case and marshal reasons. He was a convinced man.

It is quite true—are we of Great Britain to say fortunately or unfortunately? We are the political allies of this people, and we must desire to see them competent in the arts and contrivings which are the strength and the excuse of politics. But our markets—we lose them and we lose ourselves. On the other hand, there may always be enough for all, for all time.

Whatever we may believe in Europe, by reason of the fairy-books that have been written about Japan, this people has not been transformed in a generation. Especially has it not been transformed into a people of genius in those European arts and industries of which steam and steel are the primaries.

With the same American I have quoted I walked in a Japanese machine-shop where fittings and equipments were of later pattern and build than would be found in most shipbuilding yards—it was a shipbuilding firm's place—in England. 'See that overhead crane,' he said, 'they don't know 'nough to give it a move along to the other end occasionally; it's going to scrap quick. This planer wants to be taken down and medically examined; they've been doing the oiling all wrong.' This, possibly, should be the first count of the indictment against Japanese methods in

the workshops where they are hoping to make themselves a manufacturing people—this, that the best of their workmen can't or won't treat tools and machinery kindly. You may conjecture that it is because they have not been taught, but the Occidental expert tells you it is because they have not the heart, the bias, the bent of the true Western mechanic—the mechanic who believes in himself and his tools, who was born that way of a people who have created the things which have steam and life to them. It meets you in all Japanese cities which are being modernised—this incapacity to serve the need of small things which are the component parts of great things, carrying the empire of the industrial world. They are ready—nay, they are always anxious, if they are able—to buy the newest combination, hot from the brain of the inventor, but they are inexpert, even after much teaching, in seducing the best work from it when they have it, and in cherishing and caring for it to its best and ultimate uses. Any of the Europeans and Americans whom—even to-day when, with some justification, Japan's pride in achievement grows big—they pay to use their imported machines with tenderness, will notch many fingers before his tale of examples of this kind is told to you.

Take the most glaring example—their abuse of business offices built in the 'foreign,' that is, presumably, the European style. The municipal offices in the large towns, the offices of the railway companies and the newspapers, the Custom Houses, many factory offices, Chambers of Commerce in important cities—these are run up in the 'foreign' style—foreign with reference, that is, to their architecture, what they have of it, and their interior arrangement. As to the usage they get, it is foreign to anything known in Europe—

in England at any rate—away from the cargo sheds on our wharves. The walls, usually of stucco, are more delightfully hideous than all the rest, if that be possible. To explain them you might think of petroleum lamps with broken chimneys left in the rooms and corridors for three days and three nights to impart the ground tint while the stucco dried. Subsequently a squad of industrious lads came with garden rakes, fitted with charcoal teeth, to go up and down the walls to their arm's reach. Then a breed of healthy spiders took possession. Thus simply and inexpensively you procure the field of soot and grime, and the Greek patterns in black, which amuse more than they disturb you in the reception rooms of the chief offices of the leading Japanese railway companies—in Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, and elsewhere. Next the floor you will find the skirting board shredded; and in the ceiling the tuppeny mouldings have lost sections and flourishes, and the window panes may have been clean when the glazier left off. The same thing holds from their abuse of a three-storied European fabric, to their neglect of a typewriter—with the exceptions limited to the best class of banks and to machines that can't come by harm from neglect. In the broad aspect of it you soon come to think that the Occidental experts are right; you suspect that the Japanese do not possess the soul or the heart for European tools, or that they have not yet acquired it.

This is one count in the case against the Japanese as workers and artificers in European machine-shops, as wielders of the industrial weapons of the new civilisation they adopted a generation ago. Then there is the Japanese product of the machines and the tools they do not yet love as they should. Here also the facts—

all this, to be sure, is written rigidly of the present, not of the future—are unattractive.

The resident Europeans in Japan have a phrase. The handle of the umbrella they bought last week breaks away. 'It's Japanese,' they say. This explains everything. The watch they had repaired yesterday stops in the night. 'Japanese work,' they say. This also explains everything.

I met a Bradford traveller in one of Japan's former capitals—Japan is the greatest country in the world for former capitals, whereby, to be sure, it loses nothing in the quality of romance. The Bradford man was a traveller in spinning and weaving accessories, especially bobbins. 'The Japanese mill-owners,' he said to me, 'would be very glad to be able to do without foreign-made bobbins. They tell me frankly that they want to encourage the native makers, and that they take as much as possible of the native-made article. But I do lots of business with them notwithstanding. They say they can't depend on the uniformity and the durability of the Japanese bobbin, and they're sorry for it.'

You hear it said that Japanese dentists are clever; but the cement they use comes away in a month, and the pin of the crown they put on the stump of your eye-tooth may snap on a biscuit. They may be clever, but their work somehow doesn't stand. They may know how to do it, but they don't do it, and afterwards you pay through the nose to the American dentist in Yokohama for work that will hold until you have no further use for your molars.

Japanese glass-making is a great business, but you lose a lamp-chimney once a week if you remember that they are Japanese made, and one once in three days if you forget. They make screw-nails too, but unless

you are a careful buyer you may get a large proportion with the grooves on the head away from the centre. On a big scale there is the *affaire*—one of the *affaires* —of the Government Steel Foundry, started over two years ago. The Foundry undertook a home contract in steel rails. The time limit was far exceeded ; and when the rails were examined and tested, even if the inspectors were authorised to adopt a much lower standard for quality than is required for rails from abroad, the Foundry's rails didn't pass, and another order was placed abroad.

A German gentleman in Yokohama, of wide knowledge and wider experience, said to me of part of his twenty years' observation of the Japanese : 'I've tried every class of tradesmen, and I have never found one who knew his work—the trade he professed to follow. They need the German or English apprenticeship system.' And he told me how he himself had accomplished his 'masterpiece' in his young trade of shipwright in the old German days of his youth.

We have it, then, that Japan scarcely yet knows how to use well the fibre and the sinew of the machines she buys from the foreigner, in the hope of producing what the foreigner at present sells to her. Further, that the things that come from the machines and the tools, as the Japanese mechanic uses them, are not of the class of the European or American article. That is, the Japanese industrial unit has not inspired the soul of modern (European) mechanics, and does not yet know fully the art that is in their application.

Always remember that this is written rigidly of the present. There is the future. That may be great enough even upon the signs already given. Japanese shipbuilding yards will now turn you out a steamer of

as many thousand tons' burthen as you wish, with time allowed them to order steel plates from Europe. They build locomotives—one only perhaps where they import a hundred—and even if pistons and journals and cylinders and some of the vital rods are imported, the foundation has been laid. And, of course, the Japanese of these revolutionary times will attempt anything, one secret of their shortcoming being perhaps that they often stop short at attempting, or at a successful first attempt. Most of their achievements in imported industries are attempts. These, certainly, are the beginning of deeds, but it doesn't do to move in a circle of attempts.

This discussion does not touch Japan's native, her indigenous industries. There is much pertinence in this way of putting it to the foreign expert who scoffs at Japanese attempts in steel-rolling: 'Put the wives of the peasantry of Europe to embroidering a screen as these child-bearing Japanese women do it. Put a selection of boys from an English Board School to making the filigree of the stork, or the chrysanthemum on this cloisonné vase, and require them in a reasonable time to apply the pigments to the same, with this Japanese urchin's deftness. How will our peasant women and our Board School boys succeed?' Indifferently, without doubt—if they ever even finish an attempt, as the Japanese are finishing attempts in almost every art and manufacture known in the Occident, the while they retain and improve for improving times the arts and manufactures which are the expression of the civilisation they did not import.

When you go to Japan examine the Commercial Museums in Tokyo and Osaka—the stands of Japanese specimens. You will find that in a single generation

everything of ours, from test-tubes and cameras to phaetons and steam-engines, has been turned out in Japanese workshops. These are the attempts, and it is quite possible that their promise is sure. True, the fulfilment of the promise may only be in the two hundred years of my American, or when the mechanical genius has been bred into this people by the law and the prophecies of Heredity.

## XIV

## THE MERCHANT AND HIS MORALS

BEFORE you are long in Japan you find that there is one judge, or group of judges—or are they judges?—whose opinion of the Japanese is absolute and unchanging. This judge is the commercial foreigner resident in Japan. His opinion is absolute and unchanging, and wholly bad, because, he says, it is impossible to tell beforehand whether the Japanese merchant will take delivery—that is, will consider the market favourable enough to permit him to fulfil his bargain.

This is not a new question, and the judicial mind, with the facts before it, usually concludes that the Japanese merchant is not libelled. Often, indeed, he may fairly be said to be about as bad as he is called. What should be said which is not usually said by the foreign critic, is that the Japanese merchant makes a prey of his own kind as readily as of the alien sheep. It is not a question so much of the Japanese merchant's view of the sanctity of his bond with the foreign merchant, as of the code of ethics ruling throughout the commercial and business system of the Japan of the Revolution. It is a question whether there is such a code; whether the Japanese merchant has commercial morals, not whether he knows and feels it be a wrong thing to ignore his obligations under a contract with a foreign importer.

The facts are indisputable. The Japanese merchant, you will suppose, sees a market for soft goods six months hence. The foreign importer takes his order —100 cases, pattern, texture, quality, as specified or according to sample. In the fulness of time the goods are to hand from Bradford. But the market for soft goods has fallen a point or two. The Japanese merchant perceives that he cannot put the goods on the market—in other words, that he cannot abide by his contract—at a profit. It is therefore impossible for him to take delivery, for he would do so at a loss. So he or his emissaries observe very blandly, and with innocence written on their intention for all men to see, that the selvedge of this flannelling is not quite of the width of sample; that there is .01 per cent more cotton in this serge than there should be; that the texture of these rugs runs diagonally instead of laterally—that, in short, acceptance of delivery is impossible because the goods are not in accordance with sample—that is to say, 'The market is bad and I cannot sell at a profit.' If the goods are in scrupulous accord with sample, then they are a week late in arrival—that is to say, 'I cannot sell at a profit.' If the goods are up to time, and tally indisputably with sample, your Japanese merchant says, 'Give me time'—that is to say, 'Wait until I can sell at a profit.' And the foreign merchant waits, his capital to the extent of the goods locked up, until a loss is added to his banking account.

'You should appeal to the Courts,' says the foreign merchant's friend just off the sea. 'Appeal to the Courts, my dear sir? I will do that and I will shut up shop to-morrow. Have you heard of the —— case? The Japanese knew the art of boycott before Captain Boycott was born. No, old chap, I will appeal to the

Courts, and I will book my passage home. What's more, the Japanese merchant goes in at one door of the Bankruptcy Court and out at the other, as he would walk from his front door to his backyard to see the sunset.'

Well, there is the broad consideration that this is a question touching the principles upon which the Japanese commercial fabric is built, the conventional moralities which hold it together. But as to the pother in which the foreign merchant finds himself involved by it there are one or two incidental things to say.

The foreign merchant says he would make more money—not, perhaps, meaning enough—if the Japanese merchant always stood to his bargain. The truth, however, is that it is at present rather a clear case of 'twixt the devil and the deep sea for him. Let the foreign merchant hold the Japanese to his bond, and the latter, if he cannot bulldose by boycott, will seek the secure haven of the Bankruptcy Court, where he pays nothing in the pound with a smile. It is six and half a dozen in the present state of the finances and the morals of the Japanese merchant. If he were commercially virtuous the Japanese merchant wouldn't contract to buy, having no money. As he contracts to buy, it is not in his power to be commercially virtuous. For the Japanese merchant is a poor man, and, in justice let it be said, the foreign merchant usually knows that he is a poor man. For himself, at least, the Japanese merchant thinks it is enough if, as a poor man, he promises as much as a rich one. He thinks it is too much to expect him to redeem his promises on the same scale. 'I will promise—or contract—as big as you like,' says he, 'but it is absurd to expect me to do as big as I promise.' One might say the craze for

specialism has invaded the merchant class of Japan. The Japanese merchant is a specialist in promises, and his proficiency is great, probably because he keeps himself strictly to his groove—to his speciality.

To the foreign merchant this will seem to be trifling with a serious question—the most serious question, he will say, in the commercial relations, perhaps in the total relations, of Japan with the world. Nevertheless, it is almost certain that the Japanese merchant would, as a rule, be a much more honest and honourable trader if he were able. Indeed, it is not going too far to say in laudation of his virtues, that he would be glad to be able to be honest; for this is no more than saying that he would be glad to be rich, to have a substantial working capital, to have credit with the banks, to be a respectable member of society. At present he is poor; he works—or speculates—from transaction to transaction; he has no credit; it is doubtful if he is a respectable member of Japanese society. He is, to be sure, going the wrong way about establishing his credit and raising himself in the social scale by his conduct under contracts with the foreign importers, who speak about his shocking behaviour to all the world. But here the larger question enters: the Japanese merchant's very ignorance of the rightness of the right way, the morality of the moral, about the success of honesty as the best policy, suggests that which is perhaps as near the truth as you may get, this namely, that his carelessness about his bargain with the foreign merchant is not a separate or distinct sin, but merely a symptom. It is the symptom of a disease; it is an outcrop at a particular point of a vein of inferior ore in the Japanese character—the character, at any rate, of the trading-class of the country.

Consider Japanese firms in competition for home contracts. One of many narratives of fact coming to me concerns a Government contract. A certain firm A., which proposed to tender for the contract, knew that a rival concern B. would also compete. A. sent its agents by roundabout ways to encompass the postponement of the despatch of B.'s tender until near the time for opening the tenders. On the final day B.'s representatives left for Tokyo to lodge the firm's tender. A.'s agents followed, forgathered with B.'s representatives, and plied and befuddled them with drink at a tea-house until the Government office had closed and the lodgment of offers was no longer possible. It is quite probable that B. countermined by sending its men to get a glimpse of A.'s figures through the brick wall of the Government office, and by antedating a lower offer, and winking the other eye to the arbiter, walked away with the contract. This is not unusual in Japan. It is smart, a 'great scheme,' as the Americans say, a tonic to one's reputation in the marketplace.

Then if one can imitate a popular label without actually infringing a copyright, it is very good business in Japan. British soap-makers, condensed-milk makers and preserve manufacturers, Swedish match-makers and German clock-makers, might rub their eyes at sight of their labels and names and trademarks on the stalls of Japanese and Chinese cheap jacks. The Japanese manufacturer procures a sample of their wares, and goes home to make a life-like supply for the Japanese and Chinese markets, which do not know any better and would not care if they did.

When you trade with the Japanese merchant you must not establish a cardinal principle of testing every

consignment of his goods by examination of one parcel in every fifty. Nor should you make a practice of testing one in a score. 'Old chap,' says your compatriot, the English merchant in Japan, after tiffin, 'I can never be satisfied that I have the stuff I ordered until I have seen the lot of it to the last of it. I find nineteen cases as they should be, but I do not, therefore, assume that the twentieth need not be turned out.' Your cardinal principle in trade with the Japanese merchant, in the present state of his morals, is to test fifty parcels in fifty.

A year or so ago one of the Japanese Banks of the second rank—so considerable an institution as to be nearly of first rank—attempted to repudiate its obligation to a foreign Bank to the tune of £13,000, an obligation assumed, for a consideration, by an endorsement of the note of a third party, the excuse offered for the repudiation being that the business was transacted by a branch manager, for whose acts the Bank denied responsibility!

It is true—and the enlightened men of the land neither deny nor seek to palliate the facts—a great deal of oblique tortuous practice and large amounts of unclean money are needful to the easy working of the little wheels and the big wheels of Japan's present-day commercial machine.

The country has its financial backbone—a strong backbone—in its Banks of the first rank, which in their management and conduct are beyond the cavil of shareholders or of the hypercritical foreign observer. Below this, however, there is something of a commercial chaos, as below the governing class there is something of a political chaos among the people—or a chaos of political notions.

As to the remedy, all the enlightened men of the land say in chorus, 'Education, Education, Education.' This means that the evil has roots, that it is not incidental to the Japanese merchant's traffic with the foreign buyer and seller; that it is in the bone; that it is a tradition, a heritage; that it is darkness where light should be.

An important member of the Japanese judiciary, sitting in one of the Yokohama courts, recently furnished to an English newspaper there his exposition of the true inwardness of the facts with a prescribed prophylactic. His exposition is at least interesting, and probably as skilful a shot at the truth as may be achieved. The judge thinks that a confusion and anarchy of commercial morals has resulted from the upheaval of old ideas and customs—the Revolution—which began with the opening of Japan to the world and still continues. This enlightened judge then says: 'From a purely materialistic point of view the Japanese have absorbed more or less all European civilisation, but at the same time the process is superficial, and it cannot truly be said that the nation as a whole has absorbed it, or that they are all civilised from a European point of view. There is a void somewhere; that void will have to be supplied by the idealism of the West, which has been entirely ignored by Japan, while the materialism has been successfully assimilated. . . . It therefore seems to me that if we take in the material civilisation of Europe we must also take in to counterbalance it the idealism and spiritual soul, as it were, of Occidental enlightenment. The course of tuition will take place gradually. The merchants, if they persist in their present practices, will inevitably lose their clients, and it will begin to dawn on them that they

must be honest and upright in order to succeed in life in the proper sense of the term.' The judge wades a little way into the deeps.

This by the editor of a Tokyo newspaper of the front rank is also illuminative :—'The *Times* (London) observed, a short time ago, that one of the reasons why foreign capital did not come to Japan is the fact that business men were not able to rely on her commercial probity. This is true ; and one of the causes of this state of things is the fact that when we were governed by warriors our traders were regarded as so many insects to be trodden under foot. The merchants of those days grew to feel that it made no difference how such insignificant creatures as they acted. The credit of the country was maintained independently of them. But the age has changed, and now we find that in our competition with other countries the character of our traders is a matter of great importance. To suit a new age a new class of people is needed, and the work of manufacturing this class must be undertaken by teachers as a body.'

Our final opinion, in charity—for Europe has never been commercially sinless—must be that the Japanese merchant does not know the sanctity of his bond because his father before him did not know the sanctity of his. Then he has never had the opportunity of appraising the commercial value of the better way, of enjoying the profits of that honesty which is the best policy. There never was much of a conscience in the trading-class of the old, romantic, feudal Japan anyway, for they were not thought fit to be trusted with anything so gentlemanly, and they themselves believed that it was much too good for them. By and by they will learn, as the judge I have quoted says, that conscience—some conscience at any rate—is a duty even among merchants.

## XV

## THE REVOLUTION'S *MOTIF?*

THE modern mechanic may not yet flourish in Japan, nor the merchant trader of integrity. Nevertheless, the Industry and Commerce of Japan are both entitled to initial capitals in print. There is, that is to say, an industrial and commercial fabric, a category of native and imported industries, and a commercial *régime* which is at least ostensibly modern. One might go further; one might go so far as to say that the Japan of to-day is, essentially, an industrial and commercial state. In Osaka a hundred and one factory stacks convince you that if there be anything real, substantial, finite, determinate, in the intentions of the modern Japan, it must be her purpose of making things, of manufacturing. It is impossible, certainly, to laugh at a factory stack. Japanese constitutional politics amuse; there is entertainment in the social revolutions proceeding in the land; its attempts in new religions have their comic aspect. It is different when, after dark, from the railway that encircles the city, one sees a three-storied, five-thousand spindle cotton-mill, ablaze with electric light, in the factory quarter of Osaka. It is then necessary to feel impressed. A nation does not sit up o' nights spinning cotton yarns for fun, nor out of the love of experiment. The Osaka cotton-mill is, in fact,

part of that Industry with a capital, which is so great a part of the contemporary Japan. And in the morning your jinrikisha man will take you to the Mitsui Bank in Osaka, and you will see the Commerce of contemporary Japan, a pilastered, mullioned fabric in white granite, with marble entrance hall, mosaic and parquetry floors, panelled ceiling, brazen counter fittings, electroliers, and a proper air of comfortable, dignified, reposeful security brooding within the penetralia of the place. After one's satiety of the esoteric, the inexplicable, the grotesque, the foolish, the entertaining, these things, the hundred and one factory stacks, and the palatial bank of Osaka, strike into the stream of one's sensations and impressions with a sort of novel pertinence. At last there is something solid in the Revolution ; this calid maelstrom of change has thrown up a rock ; the Experiment is excused, for it has justified itself in a three-storey cotton-mill which has paid fifteen per cent and may do so again, in banks which house themselves in marble halls and pay twelve, fifteen, eighteen per cent per annum to their proprietors. Upon reflection one is inevitably tempted to ask whether this be not at length the golden thread running through the strange story of the amusing Revolution ; whether this be the crisis of its plot, its moral, its 'happy ever after' ; whether it be not the essential purpose of the Revolution to make Japan—not an Asiatic democracy, or an Oriental limited monarchy, or a regenerator of Asia, or even a shining light in Oriental darkness—not these, or any of them, but a State which will manufacture and export, and rise to opulence upon the fat profits of a great external commerce. One speculates now whether it be not necessary to go to the national trade statistics for the *motif* of the

Japanese Revolution ; whether its heart be not packed away in a bale of cotton yarn.

I can make no definite announcement on this matter, having made no discovery of the heart of Japan. But Marquis Ito said a year or two back, on an occasion of importance, ' Geography has decreed that Japan shall be a commercial nation,' and I know that in the last three or four years nearly every Japanese statesman of influence has said the same thing in the same terms or differently ; some, as Marquis Ito himself, over and over again. They have not said how Japan is to be a commercial nation with incompetent mechanics and lying merchants ; but it is certain that if they speak what they believe, they believe that Destiny has imposed a law upon their country of greatness founded upon Industry and Commerce, if it is to be great. It seems, then, that whether or not the heart of the modern Japan be in the country's table of exports and imports, the fabric of the Osaka cotton-mills rests, so to speak, upon a law, imperative and recognised. It is not everything, every institution in Japan, that has its *raison* so open, so obvious, so sufficient. One looks in vain for the *raison* of the country's party politics. Apparently it need not be so with regard to its Industry and Commerce.

And truly, take the Japanese industrial and commercial economy in what aspect or upon what flank you like, you encounter a grave reality and serious purpose, a fixity and continuity of effort, of policy, of aim, which is chiefly absent elsewhere, as in the country's religions, its art, its politics, its social canons. These lack even a law of change, an order of revolution. They are by that token chaos. But there is a Code for the Industry and Commerce of the country and an

effort to administer it, the lapses from which are relaxations rather than dalliance or mutability. Perhaps this happens because the Revolution has here nothing to revolutionise ; because Japan always was an industrial and commercial state even if it did not in the former eras trade abroad. At any rate it is highly significant to find some of the ultimate industrial and commercial phenomena of Europe indigenous to the country. Labour has been organised in Japan for centuries, after its own way as effectively, as elaborately organised, as it is in Western Europe. There have been trade guilds in Japan for at least a century and a half, and to-day they are by way of being intolerant trades unions that regulate the price of mason-work per yard, and open communication with the ironmaster who promotes his own nominee from journeyman to foreman. The Japanese worker is much more his own employer even when he is paid so much per day. Lately, for instance, the ship carpenters of Yokohama preferred a demand for an increase of wages. Having previously advised carpenters at other centres—likely sources of an alternative labour supply—of their intention to strike if their demand should be refused, they duly struck. The employers tried three great labour markets without success, even upon offer of higher wages than they had paid to the strikers, and though carpenters came from places which had not been notified by the Yokohama union, these mostly went home when they had been informed of the situation. Finally, the smaller employers took back their old men, but the Dock Company of Yokohama, more powerful than the others, engaged new men and paid them higher wages than their old hands had asked. The blackleg is scarcely known on these occasions. He is almost impossible. So, if it be a sign

of high industrial development and great industrial capacity when a nation's workers are capable of resolute combination, Japanese Industry was Europeanised before the country heard a rumour of Europe. Japan on this condition was an industrial state long ago. Moreover, if an apprenticeship system be a corner-stone of the industrial fabric, Japanese Industry should be an edifice of most remarkable solidity, for the Japanese apprentice grows from childhood to manhood in his employer's service. He begins from ten years of age, and may be released in ten years or fifteen. Sometimes he serves for twenty years or twenty-five, but as a middle-aged man he reaps his reward, for at the end of his service his employer sets him up in business. Even this boon is not without its mitigation, for, says a recent Government Report on this and kindred matters, 'The assistance so rendered by the employer creates a bond resembling the family relation. The master is entitled to interfere in the family affairs of his former apprentice, while the latter is expected to obey him.' It is not apprenticeship, but adoption.

And with an apprenticeship of ten or fifteen years—when it is not adoption—and a historical aptitude for combination—the final accomplishment of European and American craftsmanship—Japanese labour is also cheap by comparison. Not so many years ago it was dirt cheap, but the barometer of economic values has been rising steadily in the last decade or so. A Japanese-compiled table shows that in 1887 the Japanese carpenter had his fivepence per day to raise a family on. Now it seems he might raise two families, with something over. He has his fourteen or fifteenpence per day in these expansive times, but of course he pays more for the bread and butter of his life, his rice

and fish. Nevertheless we may say that while it exhibits, even in accentuated form, the principal phenomena of the most admired industrial systems of the West, Japanese Industry has also this character, that its working expenses—its operatives' wages—are even yet dirt cheap at nine shillings or ten per week for skilled joinery, and somewhat less or somewhat more for other service of the priests of the hierarchy of Labour. Japanese Industry upon these signs has a fair and auspicious aspect. Upon these signs its Labour is at least an organisation, and by no means an expensive organisation.

On the other hand, there are facts which are merely hideous, though at the same time even these require one—if only by reason of their hideousness—to think and to write of Japanese Industry and Commerce as of an affair of serious import, substantial, solid, significant, amid a welter of whimsicalities, political, ethical, social, born of the Revolution. Take the case and the condition of the factory girls of Osaka. Many of them are children of ten, a few of eight, even of six. There is a day shift and a night shift—6 A.M. to 6 P.M., 6 P.M. to 6 A.M., the working hours in each instance eleven. Sunday is a working day. There is a day and a half's holiday per month. 'The employees,' (says one account) 'are usually pale and sickly looking, more especially the younger girls, who are thin and anæmic in the majority of cases. The atmosphere in the mills is oppressive, and impregnated with dust and small particles of cotton. There are small pivot windows in the buildings, about 2 feet 6 inches by 1 foot 6 inches, seven or eight feet from the floors. The manager informed me that these windows are usually opened three or four times per day for a few minutes.

As wind interferes with the work, disturbing the cotton, they are only opened when the air is calm. In the summer it is very often impossible to open them, and the temperature rises above 100 degrees Fahrenheit. It is necessary, especially for good weaving, that the atmosphere should be humid. An endeavour is therefore made to keep the temperature from falling below 84 degrees. Boarding-houses are provided for the operatives. In one, containing sixteen rooms, each about 12 feet by 12 feet, there were two hundred adults and children—that is, twelve persons per room. I saw in a room of about 22 feet by 14 feet about thirty-five night-workers asleep.' The girls are paid from 2d. to 8d. per day. There are child-apprentices earning 1d. per day. The employees are liable to be prevented, by force, if need be, from leaving the factory precincts. In 1900 forty of them, in a mill in Central Japan, lost their lives because the doors of their blazing dormitory were locked from the outside. The owner went unpunished, primarily because it is necessary for the Japanese mills to undercut the Bombay export; also because cotton spindles are not indigenous to Japan, and there is no public opinion to protect the unskilled labour which looks after them. English conditions of the forties and fifties are mirrored here; the old and indigenous trades are organised and competent for their own defence. They do not ask the protection of public opinion, and probably their security and independence cover up the helplessness and misery of the victims of the newer commercial and industrial *régime*. Nevertheless a first Labour Law was promulgated in 1902, and there is seed of a Labour Movement in the country.

The granite pilastered bank in Osaka is to the com-

merce of Japan what its near neighbour the three-storied cotton-mill is to the Industry of the country. It is, that is to say, a sort of figurehead. It is a token, and it isn't; a splendid mask with a quasi-splendid substance of things behind it. Certainly the law of necessity environs the Commercial as well as the Industrial *régime*. The Commercial *régime* refuses equally with the Industrial to be treated as a whimsicality of the Revolution. It is here necessary to take the country seriously, if only because it is so obvious that Japan here takes herself seriously. The country is conscious of a law of commercial destiny even if its mind be a perpetual doubt or indifference as to the canons of religion and the principles of party politics. She builds a bank of Japan in Tokyo, which is our National Gallery somewhat glorified, but she toys with all the religions and with a score of philosophies, ancient and modern.

Up to 1889 there was no column for cotton yarn in the tabulated statistics of Japanese exports. In 1890 it had won its place on a total export of £236 : 4s. In 1902, among thirty candidates for space, it asked the widest column after the silk export. The export of cotton yarn in 1902 was £2,031,614. The export of cotton fabrics, in the tables of twelve and fifteen years ago, appears in hundreds of pounds. Nowadays it is swollen to £300,000 or so annually. Not so long since Japan bought lucifer matches. In 1902 she exported £834,017 worth. Seventeen or eighteen years ago she first began to make handkerchiefs of her silk. She now exports £400,000 worth in a year. These are phenomena in imported or adopted industries. The country exported raw silk from the first day of her communication with the great world, but whereas thirty years ago the yearly export was half a million sterling's worth, it

was in 1902 £7,846,072. Coal is one and three-quarter million's worth against £18,000 ; porcelain and earthenware a quarter of a million's worth against £10,000. And so on.

The best of Japan's factories and workshops are probably better than the best outside the United States. Experts in foundry work and ship repair in Government-owned shops in Hong-Kong come to Japan and find machine tools they long to mother. There are indeed but a few such shops in Japan, but they send commissioners to the United States and Europe once in two years or three to get the best without reference to cost. The great chiefs of Japanese industry are not, then, conservative. They will 'scrap' you any old machine which they are financially able to replace with a newer.

Moreover, there is a faculty of invention in Japan which is not wholly imitative, though often so alleged. They have their own Murata rifle in their army, and there is a Japanese quick-firing gun which time and war may test. Above all, there is the money-making bent in the country. 'We are natural traders,' says one of them highly successful in New York. 'They are born traders,' says an American with twenty years' experience of them.

This is the commercial figurehead—the splendid mask—the bank offices in granite and marble. There is but a quasi-splendour behind ; there is even squalor, counterpart of the industrial wretchedness in the cotton-mills. There is the canker of commercial immorality, a disease of origins, at any rate of traditions, circulating a poisonous virus throughout the commercial system of the country. There is a commercial vertigo which takes the heads of men in crises of good fortune and ill. Fifteen or twenty years ago cotton-spinning in Osaka

began to be an immensely lucrative business. Directors and shareholders grabbed the profits, all of them, and lived in a fool's paradise of expectation that it would go on always. Reserve funds and depreciation deductions were chiefly unregarded, and in the fulness of a very short time, commercially speaking, there was a shattered remnant of what had been a phalanx. There is, too, an incapacity for conservation among masters, as among men—conservation of the uses and qualifications of machines and their souls. Said Count Inouye, one of the statesmen of the country, not long since : 'There is a tendency on the part of Japanese industrials to think of immediate profits only and to neglect ordinary principles of economy. Rolling stock and machines are strained to the utmost capacity of their power. There is not a factory in Tokyo that I have not visited, and there is not a factory among them all which can be said to satisfy all the requirements of economy.' There is great contempt for the intelligence of buyers. A Japanese maker sends out a good class of article to get a name. He gets his name and proceeds to make and sell soiled goods to give the next new man his opportunity. It seems generous, but as business it is wholly bad. There is also an almost universal scheme of secret commissions whose ramifications reach the palm of the very servant of your dinner-table. She has her halfpence without kicks from your greengrocer, milkman, and cobbler. There is too a notable lack of commercial directness. Generally speaking, the Japanese rice-broker when he goes to propose a deal inquires in the first place for the health of the other fellow's wife or mother-in-law ; he may also talk politics and the prospects of an early winter. Casually, as it were gingerly, he introduces his business proposals, and the transaction is

clinched at a tea-house amid the essential hilarity of the wine cup. This is to make business a pleasure, but in a new sort of way, *more Japonica.*

Finally, there is that stiffest of brakes on the progress of Industry and Commerce—deficiency of working capital, for, despite her marbled bank offices, Japan is poor as riches are counted in Europe.

Nevertheless, there is the column given to the cotton yarn export in the Trade Tables—white thirteen years ago, black with a seven-figure entry in 1902. This is not grotesque or fantastic ; paradoxical or quixotic. It is excellent business ; a mask perhaps—for it hides anæmic factory girls who are helots—yet in one view a splendid mask. It is the beginning of the fulfilment of the industrial and commercial destiny of Japan. The country may take—the best opinion now says it must take—generations to realise this destiny, but is not the consciousness of a destiny the beginning of its realisation ?



*ROUGE ET NOIR.*

## XVI

## THE COMMERCIAL IMAGINATION

It is certain, I take it, that Japan has come into the international fight at the beginning of an era when the battle is mostly to the longest purse and the race to the slickest in its uses. There is, in this circumstance, much concern for Japan's Revolution. Dip into Japanese history and you will find that the country has always bred Generals. The question now is, Can she raise the financial and commercial genius who is the General of the new era? Nobunaga, Hideyoshi, Iyeyasu, were men of the Cromwellian mould. In point of time they 'anticipated' the Protector, who, in fact, might have learned from the last-named how usurpers may inhibit their disinterment by successors. Usurper Iyeyasu lies nobly buried at Nikko these three centuries, but where is Cromwell's dust? Nevertheless, even if there be more glorious Cromwells in Japanese history, the fact is scarcely to the point to-day when the question is whether she breeds a frequent or even an occasional prince of the house of Baring Brothers or J. P. Morgan and Co. The conditions of the modern struggle require Japan to ask of herself whether the higher commercial mind is part of her intellectual furniture; whether she can import Imagination into the dry goods business and mix her paint with brains; whether she has the commercial Statesman for the

service of her ambitions and the defence of her rights. Partially this is the interesting question: whether it is easier for a nation to learn to sell the produce of its skilled labour to the best advantage than to teach its labour to be skilled; whether, in brief, it is less or more difficult to sell a thing well than to make it well. The question is answered in Europe and America by the simple historical fact that the Mechanic was earning an honest wage generations before the Master of the Trust began to reap his dubiously earned millions. It is answered universally by the simple economic fact that the thing must be made before it can be sold. The facts thus aver that if Japan has not yet bred the Mechanic it is against History and Political Economy to expect that she should possess the Trust Master. Here again, however, Japan makes a mock of the 'facts'; neither History nor Political Economy is law unto her. She will make her own precedents, even her own economic logic. She sees and proves truth in a contradiction of terms.

For, though the competent experts usually agree that Japan has not yet produced the Modern Mechanic, the foreign and native press of Japan bear frequent testimony to the aptitude of the mind—of the leading minds, at any rate—of this people of contradictions for the broad aspects, the intricate problems of finance, for the statesmanship of commerce and its philosophy. No study, save that of the English language, is, I suppose, more popular than Political Economics in Japan. J. S. Mill has an authority there which accuses his own countrymen of some meanness of mind towards him, or alternatively convicts our friends of some lack of the sense of proportion in their estimate of intellectual values. The 'Combine' and the Trust are already almost

a fad in some Japanese industries. This possibly is not very relevant nor very reassuring evidence of the depth or of the sincerity of the Japanese study of economics; but, that the mind of the commercial General, of the Prince of the House of J. P. Morgan and Co. is present and active in the country,—though that of the inspired mechanic be merely a future intention of its evolution,—is sufficiently warranted by the acts and speech which day by day express the national industrial conspiracy and the national commercial policy. It is not, in fact, so very wonderful that Japan should possess the higher commercial mind even while she is still in lack of the lower mechanic hand. It is not, after all, an inexplicable paradox to say that she knows how to sell well what she cannot yet make well; that she is selling things while she has still to learn how to make them. The East, from Suez to Yokohama, is philosophically proficient, and the Japanese mind is unquestionably Oriental. It has the Eastern leaning to the abstract, with the Eastern disinclination to heavy hammer work, even if it be Nasmyth's hammer. Moreover, the Japanese mind had exercise in the larger manipulations of commerce and an introduction to the phenomena of monopolies and 'big deals' in the days of her proud and poor seclusion. Several Japanese millionaires of to-day (there is a group of millionaires in yen, which are florins; there are few, if any, in pounds sterling) date the rise of their grandfather's or great-grandfather's fortunes from just such able and despicable dodges in the Japanese home market of the dark times before 1859 as we witness in these enlightened hours in the pork and grain markets of Chicago. At this day they freeze an obnoxious man out of the exchanges of Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, in sunny Japan, with as icy

and effective a pressure as they manage amid the congenial blizzards that blow in from Lake Michigan. The Japanese know more than a thing or two along these tortuous lines. They knew the whole book by heart—long ago. Here, to be sure, it is the shadow we see. No light without darkness, and there is much darkness in Japan by reason of the employment of the light of the imagination in the Japanese exchange and mart.

The point, however, is that the Americans having forced the world to recognise the Business Imagination as the weapon in the international duel of the era, Japan, like the rest of us, needs to have it. It cannot well be ordered with the next shipment of quick-firers; clearly, indeed, it is the sort of thing she must furnish out of her own resources. And it is probable that the country's resources are adequate to this special need. She has, I have said, the Oriental mind, with its love of the abstract and its admixture of cunning, a comparatively important ally of the Business Imagination. Moreover, the suave tyrants of her domestic markets, as I have also said, were practising those manœuvres which are proper to the high employments of the Business Imagination, when the Americans, its high exemplars, were warring for the right to rule their own tea market.

Judge if Japan has or has not some endowment of the 'business imagination' from these words of Marquis Ito, who, though doubtless the country's Nestor, and therefore scarcely representative, here only crystallises the meditation and brooding of the traders, bankers, exporters, his countrymen: 'The Japanese' (the Marquis said, speaking to or for an assemblage of business men in Tokyo four years ago) 'have outlived the days of the

isolation of their destiny. To maintain our ground, to command a share of the gifts of fortune, it is of paramount importance for us to devote the strength and the sinew of our energy to the expansion and the upbuilding of our industries and our trade. I look to China as the field which our business enterprise should aspire to harvest. Geography has decreed that Japan shall be a commercial nation. We cross a ribbon of sea and tread a vast empire, boundless in extent, its hidden treasures intact, its millions upon millions of people ready to absorb the produce of the world and yet to want more. Shall we wonder that the nations of the earth jostle each other in their hurry to establish and extend their markets in that great country? Japan, by the very force of circumstances, is compelled to build her modern statehood upon a foundation of industry and trade. It is in China that the merchants and manufacturers of the world will fight their future battles for commercial supremacy. Should we—should the merchants and manufacturers of this country—fail to plant, to root themselves in the soil of China before the field is usurped by their rivals, not only will a deathblow be struck at our trade and commerce but our national existence itself may be menaced.'

You perceive herefrom that there is a Japanese business imagination, and that it dreams, which to do is of course the fine faculty of the Imagination. It also conceives a plan, a course of action, that which is certainly a commercial policy; whereby it is proved that the business imagination of Japan is practical, that it dreams to a purpose. This is weighty support of that paradox about the Japanese, that, though they have not yet produced the true mechanic or the upright merchant, they have yet minds which are apt unto the statesman-

ship of commerce and its philosophy. The Japanese business imagination not only exists; it has, I say, formulated a commercial policy. I have given one of its foremost men's disclosure of the policy. The same imagination has conceived an industrial conspiracy. I will give words of Count Okuma to myself exposing it. Count Okuma is ex-Prime Minister, ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Sage-in-Ordinary to the throne and people of Japan—a remarkable man, who lost a leg to a reactionary's bomb ten years ago. 'Our cotton yarns,' Count Okuma said, 'were at first a poor unsuccessful manufacture. But now we can compete with English and Indian yarns. Only the finer cotton yarns are now imported into this country from England. And even in these we are successfully competing with you, so as, in fact, to be gradually expelling your article from our markets. In other manufactures, once peculiarly yours or Europe's, we are able to compete successfully with you and other peoples in China, in Australia, in South America.' 'It is probable,' said a recent Japanese Minister of Home Affairs to me at a 'set' interview in the autumn of 1902—'it is probable that Europe and America—the outside world at large—is now at the top of the tide of its selling trade with Japan. We hope from now onwards to buy less and less from the world by buying more and more from ourselves,'—meaning that Japan as an increasing market for the producer beyond the seas is to be no more—is already no more.

The higher commercial mind of Japan, the country's aptitude for the statesmanship and philosophy of commerce, the imagination of its princes of the House of J. P. Morgan and Co., conspire industrially, you recognise, to sweep the foreign manufacturer from his position

of power in Japan and put a native dynasty in his place. Besides, there has been conceived a policy, which is also something of a conspiracy. There is a policy which is a design upon the commercial hegemony of the Pacific, per capture of the Chinese market.

Both policy and conspiracy are quite overt—quite natural indeed, and obvious and praiseworthy. It is not a disclosure I am making. As Marquis Ito hints, it is the mere force of circumstances—the plot of destiny, and all that Japan does is to listen, to yield to the counsels of Destiny. It is news to no observing person in Japan that the Japanese wish to cut the ground from the feet of the foreign importer and to lift their country upon the tide of the industrial and commercial progress they hope to make into the seat of the master industrial and commercial power of the Pacific. I am disclosing this subtle conspiracy, this machiavellian policy, to those otherwise sensible people outside Japan with whom the Japanese are a people very small in stature, very quaint, very amusing, and very clever at making pretty things.

There is indeed a mountain of difficulty and detriment in the path of the policy and conspiracy which the business imagination or higher commercial mind of Japan has conceived at the prompting of Destiny. The failure to produce the inspired mechanic and the moral merchant trader is half the mountain. The rest is chiefly financial impotence and some defects of qualities. Moreover—this might be read, if not printed, in italics —in Japan's Commerce things are a good deal as they are in Japan's Politics. That is to say, there are a few men in the van—far in the van—who think, dream, conceive, hope, and are brought to bed of great ideas, who, in fact, lead, not without profit to themselves in the

way-going. In the rear—far in the rear—there is a mass, a mob, a rabble, almost an anarchy, which, doubting that the leaders lead, scarcely in fact seeing the light the leaders hold on high because of their dimness of vision, or by reason of the light being held so high or carried so far in front, struggles in the morass of ancient incompetence, under the inky night of the prejudices and ignorances of a former age, bound the while by chains of insularity, vanity, contempt, and mere dalliance, an unblest heritage from the old social and political Japan. And the ability to see being seldom joined to a strong faculty of doing—unpracticality being the common defect of the quality of vision—there is an easy explanation of the deficiency which is characteristic even of the men who lead in Japanese commerce; they are apt to hold aloof from the spade-work. As to the errors and wanderings among the mass behind them, there is a succinct account of them in a homily of the pioneer among Japanese merchant princes, Baron Shibusawa, first of his kind in the conquest of the fame of a literal commercial nobility. Baron Shibusawa, whose ennobling was a nine days' wonder not so long since in Japan because the filth of successful trade is on him, returned to his country lately from a tour of the world. Then he told his brethren what creatures they were. 'In the West' (he said) 'business men wield a recognised and powerful influence as well in politics and other spheres of activity as in their own. What is the situation in Japan? I cannot help sighing when I realise anew how strong the disposition of contempt towards business and business men still is in Japan, and how truly the respect sometimes paid to us is more a form than of the heart. I find that abroad Japan is scarcely yet known or recognised as a member of the circle of international business

and industry. Why is this? We must shake off the content of sloth, but above all, drop our prejudices overboard to the end that in spirit and in fact we move forward to become part of the business system of the world.' And from this onwards Baron Shibusawa designated particular evils — commercial immorality, obstruction of the operations of foreign capital, lack of agencies of knowledge, and so forth, fruit of the unblest legacy.

You must know, however, that the men who dream, who have dreamt, and in theory have already woven the plot of Japan's commercial destiny, who have mixed their paint with brains and imported Imagination into the dry goods business, are not unbefriended in their own country. Marquis Ito, who is, as it were, the Emperor's Executive, encourages them, as we have seen, with the spade-work of advice. We may at least say that they are now patronised by the official demi-gods. And there is a Minister of Commerce, albeit he is also of Agriculture, and universal Chambers of Commerce which have at least the ranking of debating societies in the land. There are periodic National Industrial Exhibitions graced by the Imperial presence at their opening; there are commissions of commercial inquiry to see what is being done abroad and what Japan can do there; and there is the impoverishment in these times of the proudest in the land to compel them to take on the grime of trade and recognise its honour. There is Marquis Ito's announcement in London two years ago: 'The focus of international commercial competition is steadily moving towards the Pacific.' There is the commercial hegemony of the Pacific, burning lodestar bright in the eyes of the men who plot for their own and their country's good in Japan.

## XVII

## MEN *v.* FORMS IN POLITICS

JAPAN lately achieved her eighth General Election ; the eighth in a Parliamentary history of fourteen years, a Constitution having been 'inaugurated' in 1889. This country proves all things. It has been proving representative government in eight General Elections and ten changes of Government in fourteen years. One expects better things of France, but to Japan everything may be allowed by a Western world which for the first time loves an Asiatic people—the sum of the reasons why being perhaps this people's worship of the Beautiful.

It would be a mistake to discuss or to try to view the arithmetical facts—the eight General Elections and the ten Ministries—of Japan's fourteen years of the forms of Representative Government from the solemn historical point of view. They are interesting, but they are not much more that is yet worth the while of the philosophic historian. They are not important, for they signify nothing. It will be time to review the growth of constitutional government in Japan when it has grown—say fifty or a hundred years hence, if at all.

One of the cautions justly urged upon commentators on Japanese affairs is the avoidance of the absolute, but one may safely affirm—indeed, it is only saying the same thing in another way—that it is impossible to deduce

any general principles from the experience of this country in the usage of the political institutions she has adopted from a European country known as Prussia-England-France.

Could it possibly be otherwise? Fourteen years' experience of representative government on a franchise as restricted as that of England before 1832—is it possible that any fixed principles or any settled practice—principles or practice to which poor China, oppressed by a disease of dimension, might fly as to a panacea—could emerge from this trifling flutter with institutions which not seven hundred years of an established and recognised status has rendered more than convenient in Great Britain? Those who would have China recast her polity in a mould imported from Japan should wait a little—say two hundred years or so.

That which Japan has till now accomplished in politics has been accomplished by men, not by institutions. If China, or Asia at large, could recast her men in the Japanese mould, the world might soon as justly admire China, or Asia, as it now justly admires Japan. Tell China to copy Japanese institutions and be somebody in the world. Tell her also to buy pom-poms and defy Russian encroachment. It is the same thing. Tell a Chinese mother to bear a Marquis Ito or a General Kitchener. This is another and the right thing. Japanese politics have reached finality in nothing, and finality is necessary if you are to have general principles. It is more than doubtful if Japan has arrived upon the threshold, or entered the vestibule, of the palace of constitutional politics. So poor, so meagre, is the work of the Revolution in one direction.

One General Election day—August 10, 1902, a Sunday—I drove round the polling-stations in the

Manchester-Birmingham-Leeds of Japan—Osaka, a city of nearly a million people, second only to Tokyo. Some 10,000 of the million—or rather the two-thirds of them who voted—returned six members. There were four polling-stations—for the north, south, east, and west districts of the city. The polling-station in each instance was the office of the district or ward local government.

With eyes that have looked upon what popular suffrage has brought us to in England on election day —and a month in front of it—you see even at the door of an odd polling-station in Japan that your Ally has a long way to go towards the finalities of popular government, if, haply, the fates or the Revolution decree that she is to seek the finalities, or to reach them. Without a guide you would strike a General Election in a Japanese city only by accident, and then you might take it for a funeral. A few groups of decorous, well-dressed men, waiting for the coffin to appear; in their midst a gentleman in frock-coat — a candidate and his election committee. Some stand waiting in the narrow street, others under the eaves of the small, low-browed Japanese houses, a row of which, opposite the polling-station, has been appropriated as committee-rooms for the day, their fronts removed. The committee is in black or grey silk Japanese dress, the candidate in European frock-coat. There are policemen in white duck and electroplated scabbards. In the drowsy hot-season afternoon an occasional jinrikisha rattles up the street bringing a voter. You will find another candidate under the porch of the polling-station, bowing deep to each voter as he arrives. The candidate will not be fatigued at the end of it, and the use of the bow is not declared an act of corruption even in the

latest Law of Elections, which, nevertheless, is very stringent. In the committee-rooms there is always tea, with cigarettes, and pipes the bowls of which would leave a space in the cup of my lady's thimble. There is much tea-sipping and much puffing of highly philosophic cigarettes. The street of the polling-station is roped off from the great, busy, humming world beyond, and across its mouth the great world passes in endless, booming procession, turning an occasional semi-curious face towards the General Election, waiting in the calm, sunny side-street for the coffin to appear. The busy Japanese world respects the privacy—the quiet gravity—the 'apartness'—of the Japanese General Election.

And this, mind you, is your Japanese Election Day in the heart of a great city, a city that, more even than Tokyo, the capital, holds the secret of Japan's future—the greatest industrial hive of the Far East, where by night you will see three- and four-storied cotton factories piercing the darkness with a hundred serried window-eyes illuminated from the electric lamps by the light of which the night-shift is finishing the day-shift's work.

The election crowd, the election meeting, election literature, deputations, candidates' addresses, the stump speech, 'burning questions,' 'paramount issues,'—these and a host more are practically unknown in Japan in the European sense or degree. Canvassing is important—so important that during this election of 1902 some voters put up warnings at their private houses: 'No admittance to Parliamentary candidates,'—with ways of persuasion so devious that a new and better Election Law was lately promulgated, with some slight effect.

Manifestoes by leaders are known; so are the professional politician and various sorts of candidates—party, local, national, independent. So also is voting by a two-thirds proportion of the 900,000 who, among the 45,000,000 of a population, are entitled to vote.

With this scrappy catalogue of the symptoms of popular politics your Japanese General Election begins and takes end.

In England and America the voter is the State. This is the finality, a finality, of constitutional politics, and on the whole we have found the voter a good, progressive, intelligent State. In Japan he is still part of an experiment with Occidental notions of government. With us he is the basic political institution. In Japan the authorities ask him to vote that they may see what will come of it.

The fact is, that of political institutions as we understand them in England—or in Europe at large—Japan has as yet but one—the Emperor. Not that the Emperor is the State. Far from it. There is what is called a Cabinet. It is really a council, or occasional meeting, of the leading statesmen of the realm—a sanhedrim of its wise men. There is a Prime Minister. He may be the real chief of the strongest party in the country, but if he is it is largely a fortuitous circumstance. At present—at the time I write—he is the columnar capital, or figurehead, of the executive, and not much more. The present Prime Minister is a composite of men known as the Elder Statesmen—of whom Marquis Ito is the chief—with the Emperor as a kind of Heavenly Destiny behind them. When Marquis Ito took office one person became Prime Minister—Marquis Ito.

If I seem to write in paradoxes, refer to the Anglo-

Japanese Alliance. Count Katsura, the Prime Minister, went up one step in the peerage for having been at the head of the Ministry in whose period of office the Alliance was concluded, but Marquis Ito made it known that he himself had something to do with it. This, in effect, means that he and the other Elder Statesmen—Inouye, Matsukata, Yamagata, and others—had everything to do with it. It is as if Lord Salisbury had invited Lord Rosebery, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Morley, and perhaps Mr. Labouchere, besides his own lieutenants, to give their opinions on the Treaty of Alliance, and on the policy it affirmed, before Lord Lansdowne should put his hand and seal to it. Note also these facts. Up to his removal from party politics some months ago, by his appointment as President of the Privy Council, or Chief Adviser in Permanence to the Emperor, Marquis Ito had had a considerable party majority in the lower house of the Diet—their House of Commons—for nearly three years, but he had not been in office since March 1901. The circumstance is indifferent—to him. He had and has his say—the largest say—in the control of affairs.

We place our Prime Minister and our Cabinet and our Party System among our essential and salient political institutions. They are with us the crystallisation, the ultimate expression, of popular government. Japan has all of these and yet none of them. Her only political institution, in the sense in which the Party System is a political institution in England, is the Emperor. You can know how and where he stands in the polity of the country, how and under what circumstances he acts, and what are the effects of his acts. He is a fixed quantity. The other figures and forms are algebraic surds. In the rout of the Revolution the

other figures and forms have not been precipitated to fixed place and function by the acid of Western modes of thinking and doing. They still swim as in a flux.

Wherefore it is profitless, because it is impossible, to compose political didactics from the example of Japan for the benefit of all Asia. There is indeed an appearance, an apparition, a presumption of constitutional politics and representative government, and by and by the form may be inhabited by the spirit. The two principal parties in the State find a line of separation and a *motif* of opposition in the varying pitch of their invocation of the Constitution. One shouts for the Constitution in B minor, the other in the high C. Therefore they are two parties. All for the Constitution, but there must be some point of distinction. There must be Parties, because there are Parties in France, in Germany, in England.

Beneath or above the chaos there is among the men who rule, without any mandate or authority from the Constitution, a genuine patriotism, the wisdom of experience, the born intellect, and will, sagacity, ambition for the country. It is not party government; it is not popular government; neither is it autocracy. The Emperor is still divine enough, or near enough the gods, to be far above mere men and their politics. He is a political institution, but he is not in politics, except when, as it seems to the people, he condescends, god-like, on rare occasions to show his ministers how it should be done, which he does according to the prescribed forms of the written Constitution.

Japan is an oligarchy with the forms of popular government. The whole process of the quasi-constitutional government of the country of the present

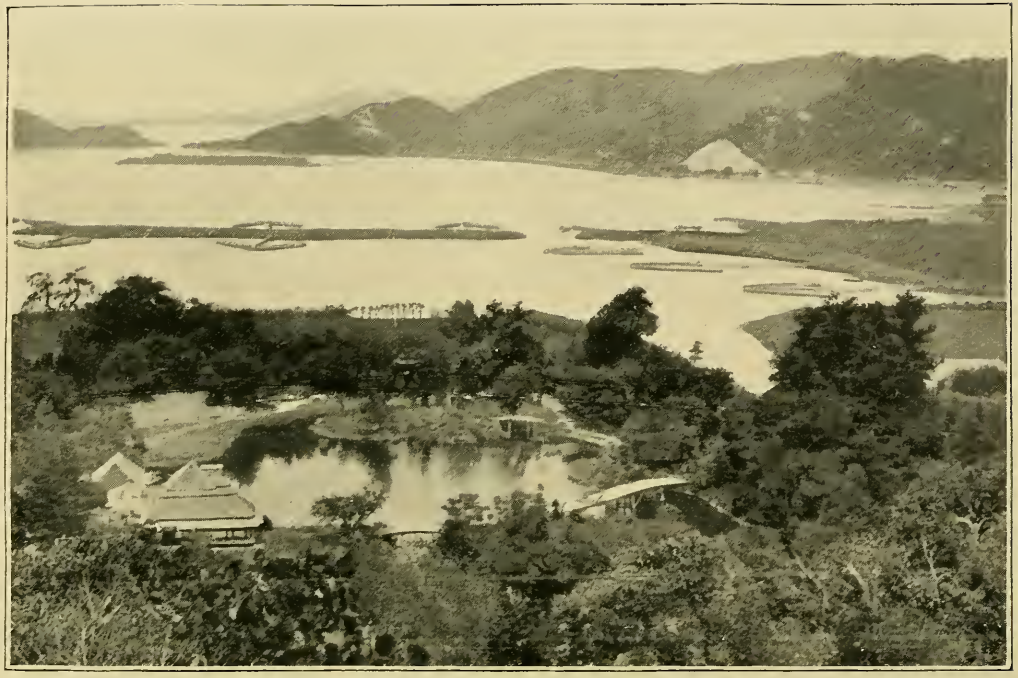
time sifts the result—admirable, if it were admirably accomplished—that the best political minds, the best statesmanship that the country possesses, is at the back of every important act and decision of the Government of the time being.

This is why Japan's eight General Elections and ten Ministries in fourteen years are unimportant. This is why it is not a very serious matter that corrupt and interested purposes should be, as they most frequently are, the motive of Parliamentary candidature. This is why the failure of the Japanese Constitution is not perhaps very seriously significant.

Neither is it very important that the greater part of the people lack the suffrage, and wouldn't know what to do with it if they had it. Japan, we may suppose, has set foot on the long road towards government by and for the people, but in this sphere at least she has not achieved in a decade that which we Western peoples have barely accomplished in five centuries.

Said Marquis Ito in a speech eighteen months ago: 'What is the fruit of constitutional politics? Party people used to ask us if it consisted in the formation of a Party Cabinet or a Cabinet responsible to the people. I do not think this explanation has been found correct. A moment's deliberation on Japan's history will tell you that this interpretation is fallacious. In my opinion the fruit of constitutional politics can only be gathered by a civilised people. With the progress of national civilisation, and with the elevation of the knowledge of the people, they will be able to form just opinions on affairs; and when the people, advanced to this stage, move in the sphere allowed them by the Constitution, they will be able to enjoy to the full the benefits of constitutional politics.'

This is a confession—a confession of the failure of Japan's Constitution, by its high priest, by its author. Nevertheless, before and after, over and under, Japan's Constitution, there is her political strength—her leaders, her statesmen.



AN OLD-TIME DAIMYO'S RETREAT.

Hikone, Lake Biwa.

## XVIII

## CONSTITUTIONAL INFANCY

It will be time to review the growth of constitutional government in Japan when it has grown. But there is the birth of a Constitution, and there is perhaps its infancy. Possibly it is History, but at any rate it is a story. My view is that it is not so much the story of a birth as the story of an experiment in grafting. Japan, searching for plants of goodly medicinal uses in the garden of European institutions, chanced upon one of great reputed worth, and, fearful of omitting a salient ingredient from her dose of the syrup of modern civilisation, she has cherished this seed of great repute with a design of extracting its saving essence in order to the just dispensation of the mixture. This, rather than the unnatural phenomenon of a birth without parental agency, is the story of the being of the Japanese Constitution. And we wait to witness or to hear of the ultimate action upon the Japanese body politic of the highly ingenious febrifuge brewed or distilled from the foundling plant.

I have by me the story of the being of the Japanese Constitution, as told without metaphor by Marquis Ito, who is called its Father, doubtless because as mere Apothecary of the Constitution the Muse of History

might be less disposed to accord him ceremonious reception. And even as the wise father should best know his own child, Marquis Ito, in the character of Father of the Constitution, may well command more of the authority he deserves upon questions of its coming into being than should belong to him with only the precarious fame of a political apothecary to whom was assigned the task of distilling the essence of this herb of celebrated properties. To cross the threshold of the story—whatever its moral be—is to encounter Marquis Ito, and in this slight excursion into Japanese history the only fit chaperon is Marquis Ito. Accepting his chaperonage I abstract the story of the birth of the Japanese Constitution from an address which, after the practice of the Man who has made History, he delivered before his countrymen in Tokyo in April 1897 under the title, 'A Brief Review of the Events that led to the Promulgation of the Constitution.'

'Having in 1868 made the Emperor the Emperor,' said Marquis Ito, in effect, on the occasion mentioned, 'in 1871 the Feudal System was with its own consent abolished, and we cast about what to do next.' He proceeds (I here quote him more fully): 'In the year preceding the abolition of the Feudal System—in 1870—a sort of National Assembly was summoned. But there was no clear definition of its legislative powers and it did nothing. We began to feel keenly the importance of obtaining a better and more intimate knowledge of conditions in Western countries. It was decided to send an Embassy thither to the end of our enlightenment. I was one of the members of the Embassy. While we were away the Government was reorganised into two separate Councils—a legis-

lative body and an executive. In 1873 the former began an investigation into the question of establishing a National Assembly, but difficulties in Korea, threatening war, interposed. The Embassy returned from the West, and the Korean crisis being overpast, the year 1873 witnessed the presentation to the Government of a now celebrated memorial urging the establishment of an elective assembly. The memorial simply asked for the summons of a popular assembly. It made not the slightest allusion to the nature of the Constitution under which the assembly was to play its part. Nor may we marvel at this omission, in view of the general standard of knowledge among our countrymen at that time as to the processes and phenomena of Parliamentary government. There were indeed some translations of English works on the subject, but they were incomplete and very imperfect. The memorial was disapproved by the Government, and then we had an insurrection, and an expedition to Formosa. In 1874 attention was again directed to questions of internal reform, and in January 1875 events had arranged the now historic conference of Osaka.' [Marquis Ito names the leaders of this conference, himself among the number.] 'The constitutional question formed the principal subject of discussion at the conference. We finally adjourned to Tokyo, where a committee was appointed to investigate the procedure best adapted for the inauguration of constitutional government. It was decided by way of preliminary steps to establish a Senate, a Court of Cassation, and an annual Conference of local Governors. In the following year (1876) the Senate received orders to investigate the constitutional question. But another insurrection' [known as the Satsuma rebellion, 1877] 'left us with a financial crisis which for three

years excluded all other problems. Soon, however, another popular movement—doubtless the sequel chiefly of the spread of education—expressed itself in a clamour for the creation of a national Assembly. It was evident that a constitution must be granted. This was, indeed, the intention of the Imperial Government from the outset, and the question was settled by the celebrated Imperial Rescript of October 1881 announcing the opening of a Parliament in 1890.'

It is a very short story. It is a mere anecdote to our tremendous serial running through the centuries from 1215 to 1832, with chapters still to be written. It is a model of condensation, compression, concentration—the compression of the history of six hundred years into a decade, with immense saving of national energy and marvellous economy of blood and treasure. With France, with England, with Europe in our eye, there is here all the semblance of a Miracle. The lineaments of that potent and mysterious grandeur are deceivingly complete. The shining example has the dazzling quality which some inner and inexplicable glory might reflect. The thing was even accomplished with miraculous ease, with that facility which is the most convincing witness of the achievement of the impossible.

But the image has no life! In effect, the dead has not been raised. In effect, its wan cheeks have only been painted, its facial muscles set twitching, as it were, by electric charge. In effect, Japan, notwithstanding the miraculous *vraisemblance* of her constitutional achievement, has not achieved in one decade or two that which we Westerns have barely accomplished in five centuries. Why, but the other day, Marquis Ito, Father of the Constitution, and lover of his child,

talked mysteriously of alternatives to constitutional government, reassuring his hearers that none such were imagined in the rare circle in which he moves, but that,—with cryptic allusion and oratorical spur to the higher patriotism. 'It is of course impossible,' said he, 'to bring all the members of the Diet to pursue one and the same policy, but at the same time, it is obvious that, unless affairs of state find some sort of solution through the discussions of the Diet, it will be impossible to continue the constitutional form of government.'

To understand it one may do many things. One may read between the lines of the short historical narrative I have quoted out of the mouth of Marquis Ito, and thereby and therein understand it. One may reside in Japan for twenty years and know less about it at the end than at the beginning of the residence—less than nothing, that is to say. One may wait a hundred years, and watching Japanese history the while, get a very lucid idea of it. Anyhow, it is part of Japan, and therefore possibly quite normal. One can only, in a serious consideration of the matter, put it down to this, that the constitution in Japan is or was part of the general experiment with European institutions which constitutes the Japanese Revolution. The experiment, in floricultural simile, is one in grafting or acclimatisation. Marquis Ito, indeed, acknowledges a popular clamour for a popular Assembly. He adds significantly that it was the Imperial Government's intention from the outset to bring in a constitution. I will add, I believe more significantly, that a popular clamour in Japan is often a whim, a passing fever, a temporary excitement—nothing more than a clamour in fact, with its implication of elements

of impulse, ignorance, and some give-me-the-moon petulance. This is an indictment, but one remembers among many other things that during the campaign of 1902 voters hung at their doors the placard: 'No admission to Parliamentary candidates.' The placard, as it is put, throws a flood of light on the matter.

The indictment, indeed, charges no more than that Japan, the Japanese, politically are yet in their constitutional infancy, that they have not yet come to the manhood of liberty and political enlightenment—that they have not fought their way thither through blood or even with tears. There are fond pretensions—I might quote such—that this Asiatic land has already entered into the full inheritance of Freedom, that her eyes have seen the vision, both its substance and its shadow, that the sacred lamp is lit in her halls, never to be extinguished. There is even a belief of Europe that Japan has received baptism of the holy water of French Revolutions and English Reform Acts. Alas, the illusion! Do we forget our servitude—the servitude of six centuries? Is a year's popular clamour the servitude, or two years'; or the clamour of a decade? Is this all the blood and tears demanded by law inexorable? Surely not—surely not, even in Japan, whose foremost man, the 'Father' of the constitution, was saying a month or two since: 'Unless . . . happens, it will be impossible to continue the constitutional form of government.'

The Japanese electoral law convicts the land of constitutional infancy—less than a million, perhaps 900,000, voters in a population of 44,000,000 or 45,000,000; less than 2 electors per 100 inhabitants against England's 17, France's 28; less than 5 of every 100 adult males with a voice in the conduct of

affairs, against England's 65, and France's 85. And scan the statistics of offences in the 'campaign' of 1902. They were 418, implicating 1683 persons. You may have the particulars:—Bribery, 201 cases, implicating 266 persons; corruption by 'tender of refreshments,' 110 cases, implicating 176 persons; corruption by the giving of presents, 30 cases, 38 persons; corruption by promise of profit, 11 cases, 12 persons; by promise of office, 3 cases, 9 persons; by promise of personal aid—perhaps in the rice-field—13 cases, 17 persons; intimidation, 2 cases; other offences 47, implicating 66 persons. Hear this 'character' of the Japanese politician by a Japanese critic, possibly atrabilious, but nevertheless Japanese: 'The majority of Japanese politicians are insufficiently educated. Some are scarcely capable of understanding the purport of Bills introduced in the Diet. The majority are poor. They are not men of the character to carve out a position for themselves in the world, nor are they content with the prizes of petty officialdom. They therefore take to politics in prospect of a good reward with a minimum of labour. It is not surprising that they lack both party loyalty and public patriotism. Their game is intrigue and chicanery, and the business of the State suffers accordingly. Parasite politicians, they resemble the outlaw robbers of the Japan of the old era. They roam around the political sea without aim save the seizure of any opportunity that may be turned to their own profit. They are active in the fomentation of agitation, and frequent disreputable quarters to brood upon their schemes. They are addicted to dissipation and sunk in corruption. Their increasing number is an ominous sign of the times.' Said a leading Tokyo daily of the

typical candidate's methods in 1902: 'A candidate spends from £200 to £600. Where the money goes is not clear, unless the pockets of the ratepayers be its destination. The candidate's plan nowadays is to provide himself with a book in which he asks his promised supporters to write their names. The number of names thus entered often far exceeds the total number of registered electors, from which it is to be inferred that some voters carry their vote into as many markets as possible, and sell it to as many buyers as they can find.' Another daily of Tokyo, of equal or superior repute, had this note: 'Candidates appear to see no reason why they should announce their political views or seek electoral support on the ground of identity of sentiment. They simply make personal appeals to the electors, and their importunity has in some places become a veritable nuisance.' Clinching these testimonies to the political infancy of the country there is—a void, a negation—the absence, namely, of protest from five or six million potential voters—as we would regard them—against their exclusion from franchise rights; the placid acceptance by these millions of the supposed rule of less than a million of their compatriots; the assent of 95 in 100 to the dominion of the remaining 5, who, peradventure, wear the jewel of political probity much too near the itching palm; whose rule in consequence is not rule but only the sufficient excuse of an Oligarchy.

Remembering the nobleness to which Japan might have risen in this affair—in the regimen of her political youth with the aid of the complete canon of conduct which she might have taken from the volumes of the History of Liberty in Europe; imagining the lustre of the example which she, though Asiatic, might have

set for Europe's Future ; trembling from the accusation she might have hurled at Europe's Past ; hoping, now without hope, for a new Religion of Liberty to be written from the inspiration with which she might have been inspired—remembering, imagining, trembling, hoping, I find a certain pathos, a note of the tragedy of failure, some of the melancholy of the blight of a fair and bounteous prospect, in the confessions of a party manifesto sent out by Marquis Ito for the election of 1902 :—'A healthy and judicious development of the body politic being the first requisite of national strength, our party must endeavour to secure progress based solidly on the *terra firma* of intellectual and material wealth. . . . Our party should devote special attention to the question of the education and the moral elevation of the people. . . . In short, intellectual civilisation and material strength are the only means by which we can ensure the permanent attainment of our object. . . . As regards the coming Election, I think it hardly necessary for me to point out to you that our party should aim at returning to the Diet as many as possible of the candidates who pin their faith to these principles, and who are at the same time of unimpeachable character and courageous and constant enough to remain true to their convictions. As to actual election methods . . . clean conduct, full freedom, and absolute good faith in all matters pertaining to the election being essential to the proper representation of the nation, our party should endeavour to avoid bringing any unlawful pressure or any improper influences to bear on the electors, and we should by our example try to prevent others from resorting to such reprehensible courses.'

We shall imagine Mr. Balfour, Mr. Chamberlain,

Lord Rosebery, and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, on an election eve, appealing to their followers to hold their hands from acts of corruption and unclean conduct, and we shall mentally transport ourselves—whither, if not to our constitutional babyhood? Marquis Ito's manifesto is a confession. The father of the constitution tells us that his country is in its constitutional swaddling-clothes. He would have it learn the alphabet of Liberty. And to think that it might have been giving us the religion!

## XIX

## AN OLIGARCHY WITH EXCUSES

It is, of course, very well with Japan if the ruling Oligarchy be sufficient. The exigent matter being that the rule, whether of despotism or the referendum, be right in relation to the appurtenant conditions, the Japanese Oligarchy is its own authority and justification if its action be the thing desiderated for the time being. And perhaps never was an Oligarchy which could turn over the pages of history, and point to so complete an array of excuses, so sufficient for its existence and continuance. 'You are curious about the validity of our status, you wish to examine our credentials,' this Oligarchy will say; 'read six pages of Japanese history since 1853, and be satisfied.' The ingenuous inquirer will read and will be satisfied. The Japanese Oligarchy is, in fact, the necessary corollary or complement of an Emperor who is still a god, and of an infant constitution. There is here a great hiatus which only the Oligarchy can fill. On the one hand, the theory and much of the reality of a divinity; on the other, the fact of a people in their constitutional babyhood. It is manifest that between a divinity who may not deign to govern, and a democracy which cannot if it would, the business of government in Japan is liable to fall upon chaos without the Oligarchy. Necessity is therefore the first mandate of

the Oligarchy in Japan; the history of the country since 1853 is its supplementary warrant, the satisfaction it is able to offer the inquiring person who has read about an autocratic Emperor and a constitutional system.

Surely never was an Oligarchy with a stronger case. Necessity, let us concede, is the prime excuse of the power that is; beneficent achievement the corner-stone of its authority. The necessity here is the people's constitutional infancy and the apotheosis of their Emperor. As to the achievement of the Oligarchy—its beneficent achievement—one might prove it simply by reference to the present status, credit, prestige, fame, lustre of Japan in the world's eye. Its achievement is the history, the creation, of modern Japan—no more, no less. The Oligarchy, or its members, when questioned, or on occasion of review of the historical facts, ascribe the achievement to the enlightenment, the wisdom, the infallibility of the Emperor, who is divine. 'I have done nothing,' says Marquis Ito, 'I could have done nothing. The Imperial wisdom has accomplished all things.' This, however, is the manner of the country; the native speech for the occasion. It is rhetorical figure, so to speak; it is in the manner of allusion; it is almost metaphor. Listen to Marquis Ito's account of the abolition of feudalism, the first great achievement of the Japanese Oligarchy after its restoration of the Emperor to his ancient seat as Son of Heaven. This account is the first part of Marquis Ito's conspectus of the events which led to the introduction of quasi-constitutional forms in Japan—the conspectus which I have already quoted for partial proof of the constitutional infancy of the country. Says Marquis Ito:—

'I would first call your attention to the period ante-

cedent to the abolition of the feudal system [1871 backwards]. The idea of a constitution was as yet foreign to the minds of the leading men. The restoration of the powers of State then exercised by the Shogun to the Emperor was the political idea of that time.' [The Shogunate was an office of State which for nearly three centuries had been the actual empire of the State, wielded by a dynasty of Shogun sovereigns, with the real Emperor ruling a palace when he was not himself an infant under parental rule.] 'There even was not among the leading men any distinct notion as to what should be done with the feudal system. There was certainly no idea of its ultimate abolition. In the autumn of 1867 the anti-Shogunate movement came to a head. In the winter following the powerful feudal clans opposed to the pretensions of the Shogunate brought such pressure to bear upon the Shogun as induced him to abdicate and resign the ruling power into the hands of the Emperor, the legitimate sovereign. The restoration thus accomplished [1868], the incubus of feudalism yet lay upon the land; the links that bound the feudal chiefs and their retainers were strong. I may venture to say that none as yet even dreamt of the possibility of the abolition of that form of polity. The minds of the political leaders were more immediately occupied with the difficulty of harmonising and uniting the jarring interests and mutual rivalries of the powerful clans which had acted the principal parts in the drama of the Restoration. Out of this prime necessity of the time arose that now well-known formula, *kogi*, public opinion, it being rightly judged by the leading statesmen that insistence on the importance of public opinion was the best check on the rivalries of the clans. In pursuance of this idea a conference of

leaders was called at Kyoto [the then capital of Japan]. This conference found its principal anxiety in the financial condition of the new government. I was at that time, in the spring of 1868, Governor of the city of Hyogo. One of the clan leaders, Kido, came to visit me there, troubling much about the financial difficulty. Pondering over the matter, the idea then came to me of the necessity—the imperative necessity —of abolishing the feudal system. I broached the idea to Kido. Cautioning me to say nothing further of it meanwhile, he hurried back to Kyoto, and soon afterwards left for Choshu to bring the idea to the notice of our feudal chiefs. [Marquis Ito is of the Choshu clan; he was a member of its military class, a samurai.] The Prince approved the principle of the proposal, but strongly advised Kido to use every caution and circumspection in carrying it out. This was the situation when an unexpected thing happened. A representation, embodying my own idea of the voluntary surrender of their fiefs by the feudal lords, was submitted to the Government by the lord of Himeji. Mystery enshrouds the original authorship of the document to this day. It had no immediate practical result. I myself then took action and made representations in support of the memorial, and my endeavours were soon powerfully assisted by the action of representatives of some of the leading clans, who voluntarily offered to restore the clan fiefs to the Imperial Government. Thus was accomplished the first step in the abolition of the feudal system in Japan. The loyalty, patriotism, and public spirit of the great feudal lords made possible the sacrifice of their rights. For a time they served as Governors of their respective clans, and in that capacity they still continued to be regarded as feudal chiefs by their former

vassals. Thus a semblance of feudalism was still maintained. Its substance and shadow finally disappeared through the simple process [1871] of relieving the local chiefs of their governorships, and through the new division of the country into cities and prefectures with new governors. This completed the abolition of the feudal system in Japan, and was the first step in our advance towards a constitutional *régime*.'

Reading by the way, may we decline the invitation to admiration which Marquis Ito's commentary on the historical facts extends in these following sentences :— 'I venture to observe that this peaceful abolition of feudalism is without a parallel in the history of the world. In other countries its disappearance was marked by disastrous commotions. In our case the change was effected without the shedding of a drop of human blood. That which peculiarly distinguished our case from that of other countries was the voluntary surrender of their fiefs by the feudal chiefs. The whole history of the transaction reveals a disinterested devotion to the Throne and to the country, which is the distinctive trait of the Japanese nation.'

This, then, is part of the historical case for the Japanese Oligarchy ; part of its excuse ; part of the validity of its status. The rest of its case, besides necessity, is the history of Japan since the abolition of its feudalism in 1871, the history it has made with at least the consent, possibly with the approving co-operation, perhaps with the enthusiastic aid of the Emperor who is apotheosised.

It is indeed possible that without the Emperor, without his existence, the Oligarchy could not have reared the structure of its splendid case in history and in the eyes of the world. After all, there is, and

always has been, a Japanese nation, a nation which, however constitutionally incompetent, in the mass privately believes in itself and publicly in its Emperor. The nation's consent to the abolition of feudalism was not asked. If that sublime immolation is to be held the phœnix birth of the modern Japan, then the Japanese Oligarchy accomplished the beginning of things alone, of its own inspired initiative. But the historical case of the oligarchical chiefs, after the disappearance of feudalism, acquires some of its validity from their own consistent profession that it is not their case, but the case of the Imperial wisdom and enlightenment. This profession is made, has been made, voluntarily by the Oligarchy, and the nation has not interfered with the Oligarchy because the Oligarchy has never claimed to be what it is ; the nation has been satisfied to assume that the Emperor has been the Oligarchy ; it has consented to an historic illusion, and the Emperor has accepted the homage due to the miraculous works of the Oligarchy, the members of which, knowing on their part that the nation is aware of their humanity, recognise the hopelessness, in whatever circumstances, of divine honours coming to them, even if the miraculous works be, in reality, theirs alone. The Japanese, you will perceive, are thoroughly Oriental. They argue the facts by supposing a case.

The outsider, desiring to apprehend the phenomenon known as Modern Japan, will encounter the facts, one of which is that Japan's modern history is chiefly the patriotism, the enlightenment, the original genius, the trained intellect, and the splendid self-sacrifice of a group of leading men ; that that history is, in short, the warrant of the Oligarchy, which to this day and at this hour shapes the country's ends, promotes its

progress, and fosters its best activities. Yet withal it acknowledges an obligation to clothe its magnificent achievements in a cloak of Imperial purple. The Japanese, like the rest of us, hug illusions. They are fond of symbols.

Yet the Oligarchy, let it be understood, is sanctioned beyond the sanctions of necessity and its historical achievement. It is recognised. Necessity has hitherto been its primary sanction, but for a generation past it has been unofficially recognised, under a name, the translation of which is usually made 'the Elder Statesmen'—the 'Genro,' in Japanese. This means, the mere title means, that in addition to the sanctions of necessity and their achievements, the Elder Statesmen have much authority from their mere relation to Japan's past. These men—Marquis Ito, Marquis Yamagata, Count Inouye, and the rest of them—have no parallel types among the statesmen of the civilised world. They have not only seen the Feudal Age; they have been administrators under a feudal polity. They have governed in the early Middle Ages; they are now Statesmen of the Twentieth Century. And the Japanese people, their compatriots, allow them the respect which is due to this unique fame. The sanctions of the Genro, of the Oligarchy which rules in Japan, rest on a triply solid foundation—the necessity of the case; the beneficence of their historical achievement, and the distinction of a record of rule which has no parallel in the personal histories of their contemporary statesmen of the world at large.

The total effect of the Oligarchy, of the position, acquired and sanctioned, of this unofficial council of wise men of the realm, is what I have before described: their rule means that the best political minds, the best

available statesmanship of the country, is at the back of every important act and decision of the Government of Japan for the time being. There is the coincidental effect that the Government for the time being is not the Government—not the Government of the constitution ; but this is unimportant until the country—the Revolution—grows out of its constitutional childhood.

## XX

## PARTY POLITICS *PRO FORMA*

Let the country's constitution be no more than an excuse for the ruling Oligarchy, you yet find that in Japan you need not be deprived of the amusement of party politics. In a way they are as interesting as the party politics of England ; in their own way, with their own background of Japanese history, they are more so, or differently. I mean no disrespect in saying that they are often something besides interesting ; that they are amusing. This is the same as to say that they are the party politics of the Revolution. It is more of a fault that the party politics of Japan are terribly confusing to the outsider who tries to understand them. The ordinary outsider is usually content to be interested and amused ; he rightly stops short at understanding. I have heard of one qualified outsider, resident in Japan from the time they began to have political parties there. He went into the subject with some thoroughness : party origins, party cleavages, party politics, party leaders, causes of the disappearance of parties and of the rise of the parties which succeeded the defunct—the whole subject. This outsider was not overwhelmed in the midst of his inquiry. Only he confessed that at the end of it all, at the end of twenty or twenty-five years' study of Japanese political parties, he under-

stood less about them than he did at the beginning. So it is not without reason that the stranger may lay this fault to the charge of Japanese politicians—the charge that their politics and their parties are confusing. I have written enough to exempt the Oligarchy from the charge, but the Oligarchy is not the politics or the parties of Japan. The Oligarchy is the Government, and easily understood. It is another question with the country's politics, with its parties. When after long study one arrives at some slight proficiency in their esotericisms, and when, upon the basis of this proficiency, one tries to settle privately in one's own mind what the whole caboodle means, the reflection—it can scarcely be an opinion—into which one's impressions subside or crystallise, as embodying the only feasible formula, is in this wise :—'The Oligarchy says, has said, to itself and the politicians, "We, you, will play at party politics and the constitutional idea in order to find out if they are practicable ; in the meanwhile we will manage the country's affairs."' 'Let us have lay figures at first,' the Japanese politicians say to each other ; 'afterwards we will have real parties if it's worth while. Let us meanwhile play the game with counters ; afterwards the stakes may be in gold.' And the game is played, with immense zest ; sometimes even with such gravity and appearance of conscious responsibility that one is tempted to think it is being played for honest gold—tempted until an interlude of Comedy or Farce breaks the spell. And yet by way of qualification, by way of justice, let it be said that many of the players seem to be imbued all the while with the consciousness that it may not, that in fact it cannot always be a game ; that by and by it must be the real thing, battle and fury and blood ; that the

game is the opportunity and the time to win the coming battle. With these, perhaps, the game is already the battle.

The process of government in Japan, the actual management of the State's business, its policy, its necessary policy, at home and abroad, is, let it be repeated, easily understood. There is really but one foreign policy and but one possible domestic policy. Politicians—groups of politicians, 'caves' of them—may espouse other policies, but these always are and always remain minor and subordinate policies. The Elder Statesmen—the ruling Oligarchy, as I have named them—are the peculiar sponsors of the home and foreign policy, because with them originated the ideas which preceded the home policy, and because their political careers have been contemporaneous with the appearance and growth of the circumstances which have been father to the foreign policy. Each successive Cabinet is either dominated as to its actual personnel by the Oligarchy or, when times of crisis threaten the home or the foreign policy, is ruled or overruled by the Oligarchy's extra-official advice. The Oligarchy, that is to say, has unintermittent charge over the home and foreign policy. In other words, it rules. This is the process of government in Japan. It is not impossible to understand it. But there is the future, the time when the last of the Elder Statesmen and their political children shall have been gathered to his fathers; the time when Japan's policy may not be the policy to be taken for granted that it is now; a time when the Japanese people may themselves be capable of politics, educated in the worthy and eminent uses of a real constitution. This future, this time to come, is, you might suppose, adumbrated in the country's party politics

which amuse. It is as an adumbration of the future, a possible future, that they interest; it is perhaps because they are an adumbration that they are inexplicable, incomprehensible to the outsider. The Oligarchy is looking to the future when it says, 'Let us all, all you members of the Diet together with ourselves, play at party politics while we, the Oligarchy, run the State.' Being wise men they recognise that party politics may in time come to mean the government of the State; as patriots they seem to desire to see the system which is to succeed them proved, tested, adapted—if only *pro forma* or even *pour rire*—before they abdicate. So the politicians play at parties and party politics with the encouraging approval of the Council of Elders which rules, and with a zest of their own which, though often the mere exuberance of the gamester, seems not seldom to be the serious intent of the neophyte in training for the mortal struggles of the amphitheatre—a mixture of metaphor which is quite applicable to the case, let me say.

Conscious, perhaps, that their party politicians succeed too well in being grotesque, because their politics are merely a sort of play as yet, Japanese publicists sometimes deprecate the stranger's smile with the observation that it is not necessary to believe that in its evolution in Japan, representative government shall inevitably assume the form and body of the party system. 'In other directions we have proved the fallibility of History,' they say, 'why not in this?' And truly why not? They propose, these marvellous masters of legerdemain, to produce the Goddess of Liberty from the narrow circuit and the shallow capacity of a divine Emperor's crown; why not representative, responsible, popular government without

political parties? At present our reply is merely this, —that for a country which proposes to cry stinking fish on the party system Japan has quite an extraordinary, nay quite a prodigious, array of parties. And on the basis of this intention of Japan's political evolution what becomes of the game? If, gentlemen, the game be not a training and exercise for a fight to come, are we not asked, do you not ask us, to view a performance of burlesque? It is not, then, the jousting lists we look upon, but pantomime.

Consider briefly some history of Japanese politics. Hear a Japanese description of the party situation, luminous with the voluntary revelations of a confession, lifting the veil upon a scene in the lists or the vaudeville stage, as you care to interpret it. 'The common malady of all the political parties in Japan,' says the *Japan Times*, of Tokyo, speaking its Japanese editor's mind, 'is the want of cohesion and the consequent tendency to disruption whenever questions of importance offer the least opportunity for difference of views or conflict of interests. In their early formative stages, when the members are comparatively few in number, they usually appear to promise a wholesome development. But as soon as they reach a certain stage of growth they inevitably show unmistakable symptoms of the constitutional disease above alluded to. Either the leaders quarrel among themselves or the rank and file become dissatisfied with the leaders, and a party which it has taken years to organise splits into several small insignificant groups. . . . This peculiar state of affairs is the result of a multitude of causes. . . . There is first the prevalence of the spirit of provincialism among our politicians. When disintegration takes place in a party it usually happens that the disintegrated elements

group themselves on some local geographical basis.' [Much as if the members for Lancashire might secede from their respective organisations and form a Conservative-Liberal party.] 'On the recent disruption of the Liberal party, for instance, a portion of the seceders, coming from the eight provinces around Tokyo, formed a separate party, while those from the north-east are reported to have in contemplation the organisation of another local group. Tosa [a province in southern Japan] being the cradle, and for a long time the stronghold of the Jiyu-to [one of the historic parties], it is but natural that men from that locality should form the nucleus and backbone of the party. On the other hand, the politicians from the Kwanto districts in the north-east do not like being left out in the cold. . . . Another factor [in the phantasy of parties] is the instinct of hero-worship. Hero-worship is the most distinctive feature of the Japanese character. Like the habit of provincial jealousy it is the product of our national history. . . . "Better be a cock's head than a bull's tail" is the motto deeply imprinted in the minds of the petty heroes of the political world. . . . [The situation therefore is that], in the meanwhile the country will have to be contented with a makeshift arrangement like the one now in existence, a sort of mixture of clan [meaning oligarchical] and party government.'

This is a writing of 1897, but it is in fact a very precise account of the behaviour and deportment of the Japanese party politicians of to-day in the game they play. Hear the fine candour of the same editor in the following year, 1898:—'It will not be far from the mark to observe that nobody is more keenly alive to the fact than the party leaders themselves, that ninety-

nine out of every hundred of their followers are entire strangers to an intelligent knowledge of party politics in their practical working.' About the very time of this comprehensive indictment came a sign in the sky, hailed as a very signal of the New Era by this very editor among others—the Era whose beginning should be the end of the play, the hour when the Oligarchy should say : 'Our period has closed ; the Party System and the Constitutional Idea are one, and henceforth practicable.' 'The year 1898,' says the editor I have quoted, 'has been in many respects one of the most remarkable in the modern history of Japan. . . . Events demonstrated that a Cabinet independent of parties had been rendered impossible by the march of political events. . . . A decided advance has been made in the political development of Japan. The bold and timely resolution adopted by Marquis Ito in June dealt a final blow at the system of clan (oligarchical) government, and gave an immense impetus to the introduction of government by party.' What, you ask, was this sign from Heaven, this portent of excellent omen in the political firmament? This is the story of its appearance and aspect. At the beginning of the year there was no Government — the Ministry of Count Matsukata had just resigned. Marquis Ito was summoned. Upon failure of other alternatives he formed the usual Cabinet of friends and relatives, with the Oligarchy in the background. The 'opinion of the country' was taken, but no single party secured even a crazy majority. 'Immediately after dissolving the House,' says the account just quoted, 'Marquis Ito set about forming a political party of his own, but in this attempt he was powerfully opposed by the senior clan statesmen and, seeing no other way of extricating the

country from its peculiar trouble, he advised the Emperor to summon the Opposition political leaders, Count Okuma and Count Itagaki, whose parties had just been amalgamated. Thus was formed on June 30th [1898] the first party Government in Japan.' This is the story of the apparition of Japan's second political Labarum, the second after the Constitution. It was the apparition of an hour. In four months, we read, the 'historical jealousy' of parties rent the Cabinet in twain. A Government of Elder Statesmen quickly restored the *régime* of the Oligarchy, which still endures, so solidly based it seems, that the present Government of Count Katsura has been in power since the summer of 1901, without any support save the consent of the Oligarchy to its existence, secured by consent on its part to the Oligarchy's real rule. But the politicians continue to play at parties, and the philosophical radicals of the country continue to hope that some day soon parties will govern.

Is it not, then, just to say that Japanese politicians have as yet only played with or at party politics? What is the historical meaning of a picture which is a dissolving view of parties, a phantasmagoria, a kaleidoscopic procession of them, if it be not that the politicians concerned as yet but play at party politics? There are doubtless sufficient explanations, complete excuses of the fact, but the fact itself is the matter of moment. Put away then the delusion that Japan, if it has a constitution, if it has parties, party chiefs, party organisations, theories of party loyalty, and even a political enlightenment that might support an *a priori* assumption of the successful operation of the party system,—put away the delusion that therefore there is party government in Japan. It is above all things

unsafe to argue from the premises in Japan or of Japan. He gains a fact about Japan who realises that party politics do not there mean party government. Up to date they have meant a diversion, a sort of amusement, —this, but let us by no means say a folly. To-day's foolishness in Japan may be to-morrow's truth, reality, pith of life.

## XXI

## THE GRAND EXPERIMENT

THE Japanese Constitution is to be esteemed the boldest experiment of the Japanese Revolution and the approved success of the Constitution would have been, or will be, its greatest achievement.

Hitherto the Constitution is the great, the conspicuous failure of the Revolution. Born it has been, but still-born. If one is to presume or to prescribe a natural order or progressive category of experiments for such an enterprise as the Europeanisation of Japan, the proportionate importance of the Constitutional experiment is measurable by its proportionate success. If the degree of success be practically *nil* in relation to all others of the series of experiments which compose the total enterprise, it is proved that the Constitution is the highest flight of the soaring effort of this unique People. One may reason further. If Japan be typical of Asia—if at heart she is Asia, and if her Revolution shall have registered some points of success in the use of all others the great institutions of modern European statehood, the single exceptional failure of the constitutional polity in a manner proves that this institution is in a special sense foreign to the Asiatic idea, that its

uses are in particular opposition to the preconceptions and prejudices of the Asiatic state system.

Asia's history proves as much; there is there positive testimony to the grave assumption that underlies the comparative failure of the Constitution in Japan. This failure is a redoubtable fact in evidence of Japan's affinity to Asia, of her identity with Asia. And so a new light is thrown upon the grandeur, the hazard, the courageous empiricism of the Revolution, its fine contempt of precedent, its fundamental faith in the efficacy and ultimate effect of European Reason upon the deep and strong-founded obstructions of race-origins and race-evolutions. The Revolution is admirable from its having placed a Constitution upon its programme; it is not less, but more admirable because its Constitution is so far its most notorious futility. An instantly successful Constitution—an immediate or, as it were, natural habituation to the duties, the privileges, the uses of a constitutional polity by the Japanese people—would have been strong assurance of the necessity, or, as it were, the naturalness of the Revolution in Japan. The world would then have beheld no wonder, no miracle, in Japan. The Revolution would have been the order of events, and the New Era merely the logical morrow of a premised yesterday. The failure of the Constitution is a great fact in support of the pretensions of Modern Japan to be classed outwith the natural history of politics—that is to say, as a phenomenon. Others, her great experiments in European civilisation, being partial or complete successes, this conspicuous failure is index of the enormous significance of the successes.

Nevertheless, by legitimate extension of this reasoning, it is necessary to believe and to affirm that only upon the ultimate success of the existing Constitution,

or another, can the Revolution be firmly established, or proffered for the inspection of the world, a fact accomplished and sufficient.

One implication of the interpretation just given of Japan's Constitutional failure is this, of course, that no Constitution would have been or could have been an instant success.

There can be no impeachment of the framer of the Japanese Constitution for his failure to make a Constitution which would have been an immediate and complete success. The question is whether his Constitution has had as much success as any other would have had ; whether, in fact, it was the perfect Constitution for the imperfect conditions. And this question is one which no outsider could possibly debate in all its bearings, or debate at all with any hope of profit. We of Europe can only refer to Reason. The psychic, the sociological, the political symptoms which Marquis Ito was required to survey when he went to work upon his Constitution must have been the profound and vital crisis of his task. Not knowing them, incapable of knowing them, we can only ask whether, in accord with the spirit of the Japanese Revolution at large, he applied to them the touchstone of Reason ; whether Reason was the acid he employed to precipitate the esoteric solutions of the Japanese-Asiatic character in its relation to politics.

Taken upon this flank, assailed by this artillery, Marquis Ito's Constitution is scarcely impregnable. It is, in fact, a house of cards, if not a fabric of smoke.

From of old, from ' ages eternal,' as the Constitution affirms, the Japanese Emperor has been a god. He is the descendant and representative of the Sun-Goddess, Ama-Terasu, heir as well of her divinity as of the

Japanese realm over which she was placed in illustrious authority by Izanagi, the divine author of being. The Japanese Emperor is to this day a god. Said a genial French father, of a quarter of a century's residence in Japan, to me of his work: 'Yes, their Mikado is a god, and our proposition to them of a God supreme over all is an offence to his divinity.'

Now, there also was and is, in Japan, the aboriginal Asiatic inaptitude for the constitutional polity. Or, disallowing this if you wish, there was at any rate the Feudal Age, not a score of years abolished by Imperial Decree.

Did ever a like situation confront a Constitution-maker?

There was an Emperor-god, and a People who, while yet they had not learned, as they could not have learned, save by a miracle like the gift of tongues, the alphabet of free politics, demanded a Constitution, after, possibly because, they had been spontaneously promised one.

Would the Emperor consent, was it proper that he should consent, even if he would, to resign his divinity? Should the eyes of the People be opened? Could their eyes, if opened, bear the withering light? Even if it were proper that the veil should be rent asunder, was the time fit, with the Feudal Age scarce a score of years gone by, and the huge eruption of the Revolution flooding the land with a welter of new, overwhelming ideas?

Marquis Ito describes his dilemma. 'I had the great honour,' he says, 'to receive His Majesty the Emperor's orders to draw up a Constitution. I decided to study the Constitutional systems of Europe on the spot. So I left Japan for Europe in the spring of 1882. I felt very keenly the difficulties of the task assigned to me. The point which caused me greatest anxiety was

how to frame a Constitution which should not jeopardise the integrity of the Imperial polity of Japan. The question was how to harmonise monarchical principles with liberal ideas. The great American statesmen engaged in framing the Constitution of the United States encountered a great difficulty in the fact of there being no precedent available for their guidance in laying down fundamental laws for a Democracy on such a large scale as theirs. I was placed in a similarly awkward situation though of an opposite kind. I believe that I have endeavoured to preserve intact the prerogatives of the Throne.'

Marquis Ito mentions 'monarchical principles' and the 'prerogatives of the Throne,' but these must be euphemisms. His Constitution is quite candid. Article III. is: 'The Emperor is sacred and inviolable,' and in a book of 'Commentaries' by himself on his own Constitution, Article III. is extended by Marquis Ito with this comment: 'The Emperor is Heaven-descended, divine and sacred. He is pre-eminent above all His subjects. He must be reverenced and is inviolable.' On the Emperor's birthday in Japan, officials, from Prefectural Governors — perhaps from Prime Minister, though this I do not aver — to office-boy, bow before His Majesty's portrait. It is the act, though the act may not always be in the spirit, of adoration. You may not look upon a passing member of the Imperial House in Japan from the elevation of a doorstep. You may not even raise a cheer as Royalty passes by in its carriage or jinrikisha. The Mayor of a great Japanese seaport where there is a community of a thousand Europeans and Americans, in a table of 'instructions' to persons 'entitled' to witness the passage of the Emperor through the local railway station a year

ago, includes these among the instructions as to conduct: 'The most respectful attitude for those welcoming His Majesty is to stand upright, with hands hanging down, eyes downcast and head forward, without a movement;' 'No comforter or umbrella may be used;' 'Smoking is strictly prohibited, nor may a cigarette be placed behind the ear.' A year ago a lecturer in ethics in a Tokyo school, teaching from an English professor's text-book, suggested that regicide is not always unjustifiable. 'There are some acts,' said he, 'which are justifiable if their motive be good.' Government required his resignation and cancelled a privilege of the school under which its graduates were qualified to teach in Government secondary schools. The cancellation was made retrospective. Some years since a Minister of Education, desiring to stigmatise the increasing meanness of his countrymen's ideals, declared that if Japan should ever become a republic its first president would be a millionaire. The remark escaped him, and his resignation shortly followed.

Marquis Ito's Constitution in theory affirms a divine Emperor, and in practice requires acts of adoration. The People acquiesce without knowledge — that is, they are left to undisturbed possession of their old ideas about emperors. The generosity of the Constitution refuses to deprive them of a god. They are not even enfranchised. Some, though without votes, may suspect, but they acquiesce. Many, who have votes, know, and they sometimes speak, but afterwards they acquiesce, in the official apotheosis.

No Constitution could have been a success from its birth—by reason of Japanese origins; but is it clear that the Revolution, represented by Marquis Ito, drew a Constitution as near as possible perfect for the im-

perfect conditions? Should the Emperor have thrown away his mantle of sacrosanctity? Should he have consented to come down to earth and be a man? Were the People prepared, are they prepared, to give up a god without tears or worse? Was it proper or fit that one party to the great covenant should be required to relinquish Heaven and the other their hope of it?

You smile at these queries associated with a political Constitution of the penultimate decade of the nineteenth century. So do I, but they express the situation. So extraordinary a thing is the Japanese Revolution!

We of Europe are not competent to investigate all the questions which the Japanese Constitution raises. I at least am not. For instance, I do not know if the Japanese people, with their mysterious Oriental origins and evolutions, were or are fit to bear up against the shock of a Constitution which should suddenly disclose to them that one of their gods eats rice day by day, the while they had fondly supposed that he dined exclusively on ambrosia.

What I know is that, in conscience, I for one do not here admire the Revolution. I am not able to say in what degree it has gone wrong. I know only that it has here departed from my ideal of Reason, from its own ideal of Reason, pursued in other high affairs with a zeal at once admirable and effectual. Reason loved and entreated, has achieved miracles for the Revolution. Here, spurned or coldly ignored, she is revenged by a fantastic futility which, if the conspiracy of deep and enduring phenomena must have rendered great part of its failure in any event unavoidable, might, I am persuaded, have been shorn of part of its foolishness if its authors had more candidly invoked and more freely used the counsels of Reason.

I do not here admire the Revolution: that is, I admire its constitutional experiment, but upon the one test which I can apply to it—the test which the Revolution by its achievement authorises—I do not admire the 'history' of this experiment, the choice of constituents, nor their co-relation and disposition.

It is sometimes said in Japan of Marquis Ito and the Oligarchy which righteously rules without a shred of authority from the Constitution—their rule being part of the Constitution's failure—it is said of the Oligarchy that be the theory of the Constitution on the Emperor's position what it may, and the practice under it, on the same question, what it is, they, the Oligarchy, being patriots and believers in the Revolution to its last purpose and effect, will prepare the way, are preparing the way, for the great coming time, the time of truly free, representative, constitutional politics. This is a hard saying. It means that the Japanese Emperor will sacrifice, first his divinity, afterwards his divine right. And the Constitution is written. Its seventy-third Article says: 'When it has become necessary in future to amend the provisions of the present Constitution a project to that effect shall be submitted to the Imperial Diet by Imperial Order,' and Marquis Ito's appurtenant 'commentary' is: 'The Constitution has been personally determined by His Majesty the Emperor in conformity with the instructions transmitted to him by his ancestors, and he desires to bequeath it to posterity as an immutable code of laws, whose provisions his present subjects and their descendants shall obey for ever. Therefore, the essential character of the Constitution shall undergo no alteration.' Take an instance of Marquis Ito's interpretation for practice of his Constitution. In March

1901 a no-confidence vote was moved against his Government in the House of Representatives. Marquis Ito gave the proposers this piece of his mind and Constitution : 'I suppose the object of the introducers of the Resolution is to demand the Cabinet's resignation. [Cries of 'Yes, yes.'] But I have been favoured with a renewed assurance of the Imperial confidence, and I desire to say that even if the Resolution is passed by the House I shall not leave my post so long as I enjoy the Imperial confidence. If the proposers are serious in trying to compass my resignation, I might recommend them to replace the Resolution by an Address to the Throne, for it is only through the Emperor that I can be removed from office.'

On the whole, the farther you read the less you like the 'history' of the greatest experiment of the Revolution.

It leaves, it has left, the cardinal vexation of the pre-constitutional time, of all pre-constitutional times, untouched, unsolved. Not only so, it has left that cardinal vexation in the extraordinary shape which it had assumed in Japan because of the Emperor's divine descent. In Europe long ago it was the struggle of the King's divine right with the man's natural right. In Japan the terms are the divinity of a god and the prostration of his adorers. The terms are these even to this day of the Revolution. Is Reason, supreme over all gods, preparing a *dies irae* for revenge of her spurning? Or is this day of blank constitutional failure a sufficient day of wrath? Remember that the Revolution must succeed in this affair or fail utterly.




A POLLING-STATION ON ELECTION DAY.

## XXII

## CHAOS AND AN A B C POLICY

Some ten minutes' walk or less in a westerly direction from Shimbashi Station, Tokyo—at which your train from Yokohama lands you—will take you into that part of the Japanese capital which is Paris in embryo—the materialisation of the New Era in stone and lime, and tree-lined drives. To reach this district you naturally cross a mediæval moat on a crazy pile bridge: this is Tokyo, and Tokyo is the centre of the Revolution. Then you pass some low brick houses like Camberwell tenements, and again a long, large, strange lodging, vulgarly European to the first story, thence upwards ancient Japanese; fantastic, grotesque, incongruous, but successful as a presentment in wood and plaster of a fantastic time. You proceed, and in a minute you open up a generous prospect of drives three chains wide, skirting the blithe, grassy, unobstructed levels of a park, backed in the distance by the clean, square, white-and-red elevations of brick-granite buildings, imported from Whitehall, and touched up with American improvements in transit. This is very bright, hopeful, inspiriting. You walk on, along the drive before you, and at fifty yards more you have on one side a natty, spick-and-span, point device villa, with

a pinafore of trim, plotted, shrubby lawn, and a girdle of stone-and-spike fence broken, or buckled, by a stone-post gate. On the other side of the drive, opposite or nearly opposite this villa, there is — a prison; or it might be a nobleman's stables; or his kennels; or even a congeries of decayed chapels of ease. It is, in fact, the Japanese Houses of Parliament until the Japanese Lords and Commons can begin business in the new Houses which have for some time past been building in the air, but, owing to shallow Japanese coffers and many pressing demands on them, have not so far found a site on earth. 'The building,' writes a friend of mine, whose epithets excuse my own, 'is simply deplorable, and quite unworthy of the position which Japan now occupies among the nations. It would indeed be scornfully rejected as the legisaltive habitation of a provincial parliament in Canada or Australia.'

Well, well, there is a Japanese Navy not far away which, I suppose, can clear for action at a moment's notice; therefore there are these Japanese Barns of Parliament.

And even so, to me they shall forsooth be ennobled, or at least excused, by the grand, the unique experiment which for three months of a Parliamentary session is conducted within them. The glory of the experiment, its daring, its hazard, the vast and pregnant issues which hang upon its success or its failure, make these Barns of Parliament in Kojimachi, Tokyo, as it were, a House of God. Or, in another view, is it not prudent to wait until there is a Japanese Parliament before you desiderate a Palace for its Habitation? There is a Temple of Liberty, but there is no sacred shrine of Pantomine.

Here, under these roofs—'deplorable and quite

unworthy'—meets the Japanese Diet for three months from the first or second week of December. At the opening, in the Peers' Chamber, there is the Emperor with an Imperial Speech breathing sacrosanctity the while it affects to be a King's Speech pronouncing the legislative programme of a People's Government. The Japanese press gallery imagines how the Emperor looks in the delivery of his Speech : abutments are cunningly contrived to hide him from the bodily and vulgar eye of the press gallery, so its mind's eye is requisitioned. A cloud of Dignities accompanies the Emperor and, the Speech ended, moves swiftly thence with him. Some say he and they are the only dignities of the Japanese Diet, and unquestionably the deliberations of the Lower House are often a riot, or, at any rate, its noise. The member has his desk ; on its face there is a metal plate, hung upon a peg. It bears a number—the member's. When the member wishes to speak, he uses his plate as a clapper : thus he catches the Speaker's ear. With it he also protests. Denominated to speak, he mounts a rostrum—part of the French contribution to the Japanese Parliamentary Mosaic—and speaks, commonly with vehemence, on occasion with prudence, sometimes with wisdom. If the Japanese General Election be a funeral, the Japanese House of Commons is by way of being a wake. Nevertheless, along with the Japanese House of Peers, it accomplishes astounding feats of legislation per session. In its tenth, 1896-97, 121 'projects of law' were 'presented,' 62 by the Government, 2 by the Upper House, and 57 by the House of Representatives. Of the total 51 were passed. In the ninth the total presented was 162, with 93 passed. There is alike a maximum of work and a maximum of talk in the Japanese Parliament. This Legislature,

judged by its success in making laws, is among the most remarkable in the world. In three months it gets through a programme which would consume half-a-dozen Westminster sessions. It does this by referring all Bills to committees, and accepting or rejecting the committee's report. Doing this, it achieves a success that might seem to excuse all its failure. At least, you might say, this Parliament, if it fails to govern by the people for the people, makes an abundance of laws—that is, it succeeds as a Legislature. But with the making of an abundance of laws in 'record time' the success of the Diet of the Japanese Constitution of 1889 ends. It is a complete demonstration of a somewhat novel truth, that the success of legislatures is not to be measured by the volume of their consummated labours.

First, of course, there is the fact that the Japanese House of Representatives is not a representative house. It is returned by perhaps five per cent of the population of adult males, including qualified voters who do not vote. Then members of this House of Representatives which does not represent, are as yet chiefly honest, avowed makers of a political living. Many have scarcely yet arrived at the epoch of concealment—that era in the development of a free political system when it becomes necessary for the politicians to profess political probity for appearance sake. 'It is disinterested men we need,' Marquis Ito confesses. So it is, and the wages of the Japanese legislator are the voice of a syren to the few who would be disinterested if they might. The member's salary of £200 a year has vast potentialities in a country where the masses bring up families on a pound or thirty shillings a month, where the Prime Minister receives £960 a year,

and a bank account of £100 is affluence. The M.P., too, has his £200 for a three months' session.

Besides a House of Representatives which does not represent there is the political simplicity, the picturesque, vari-coloured ignorances, the encrusted indifferences, the tenacious egoisms, local and general, the customary tyrannies, the consecrated prejudices; in a word, the deep-seated Orientalisms, of the mass of the people who, if the Revolution has unsealed their eyes and given them a glimmer of the glorious vision, are not far enough removed from the deep darkness of the Feudal Night to perceive the real brightness and the super-excellent benefits of the light of the New Day. There is the mass of the people which the House of Representatives should, and may some time, represent, but which in the meantime does obeisance to its Mikado-god, and is not even indifferent to the franchise, some knowledge being a necessary premise even of the attitude of indifference. The leavening of this lump with the leaven, first of desire, then of hope, then of knowledge, is part of the future work—the enormous future work—of the Revolution. It is a failure of the Revolution that in this work it began ill with a Constitution which perhaps retards rather than assists the process of unsealing the people's eyes.

There is further the total failure of Japanese political parties, a failure which spells the indefinite postponement of quasi-representative government. Popular government has not yet cast a shadow before in Japan; its substance has scarcely yet risen above the distant horizon whence it might cast a shadow.

Finally, there is the ruling Oligarchy, whose rule is at once a signal of the failure of constitutional politics in Japan and a guarantee of the progress of the work of

the Revolution, that work which, according to some professed expectations of the Oligarchy, is preparing the way or will prepare a way for the success of constitutional politics in Japan. The men of the Oligarchy are the trustees of the Revolution, men who either themselves assisted at its birth, or sat at the feet of its creators. They are repositories of the secret formulæ of its regimen, heirs of the onerous duty and glittering fame of holding its banner high and untarnished amid the 'seas of trouble' which in these present days peculiarly threaten its achievement, even its existence.

Happily for the Oligarchy, for the Revolution, for Japan, there is a wonderful clearness at the centre of the darkness of confusion, contradiction, ineptitude, which the failure of the constitutional experiment has brought down upon the domestic politics of the country. Happily Japan's home and foreign policy is, as it were, the A B C of politics. The children of the rural villages of the country might understand it, and the need of it. I have no doubt some of them do understand it. The Japanese peasant, though he could not vote intelligently, could or might expound the national policy to you with all the precision and less of the hesitation of the average Japanese politician, who, as he must seem to be wise, must postulate the need of wisdom. In Europe it is a question what is to be the course of the ship; for what port are we making, for what port shall we steer? In Japan the course is laid, as it were, by Destiny, and the children of the land perceive whither it leads. The question is solely one of steering or, if you like, of navigation. The Oligarchs are experienced, efficient, able navigators, precisely the men for the ship in fact, but their command is held without regular authority; it is not stated in the

Articles of the Constitution, it is usurpation of a sort, and in a manner the negation of order and system. Their rule is the one bulwark against political chaos in Japan, but their rule is itself chaos of a kind.

The national policy is indubitable cosmos, or, if you please, the rule of three, the A B C of politics. Abroad it is the preservation of China's integrity, until China's integrity is no longer a practical policy. You hear of this policy under the name of the Manchurian Question, sometimes as the Russo-Japanese imbroglio. They are one question, one policy, which for Japan is as clear as the light of high noon, as evident as morning. At home the policy is, if you wish, what the Japanese Emperor calls it, 'The work consequent on the Restoration,' or what I call it, 'The completion of the fabric of the Revolution,' or what Marquis Ito calls it, 'Education.' Says Marquis Ito, who quite excels the Japanese Emperor and me as an authority: 'One of the topics that most frequently occupy my mind is the destiny of our dear Fatherland, its people, and its civilisation. I scarcely need tell you' [Marquis Ito is talking to a Japanese journalist friend] 'that the fundamental condition for the future prosperity and greatness of the Japanese People consists in making it our aim to identify ourselves, as far as possible, with the most forward of the living civilisations of the world. The crisis of this choice should never be lost sight of in our endeavours at reform and progress in every department of our national life. I am, of course, aware of the importance of maintaining historic continuity in our national progress, and of adapting our reforming efforts to the special conditions and requirements of the country. That goes without saying. While, therefore, we must guard against any unnatural and

abrupt deviation from the past history of the country, our ultimate and constant aim should be in all essentials to bring our civilisation in line with that of the most advanced nations of the world. Stated in this general manner few of our countrymen will take exception to my view of the matter. But if you look into the reality of things you will easily find instances of short-sighted deviations from the right path in legislative, in political, in educational, and in social quarters. . . . Of all the spheres of our national life it is in that of education that we should take particular care not to stray from the right path, for any faulty step in this field is fraught with far-reaching consequences.'

In Education, it seems, is the future of the Revolution, which, to be complete and sufficient, must include constitutional politics, the life of an incorporate people, the breath of a justly ordered state.

## XXIII

## A POTENTIAL DEMOCRACY?

Is there a Japanese Democracy?

'Modern Socialism would not develop in Korea or in Tibet as a banana tree will not in the North Pole. It would be an utter nonsense to talk on the subject of forming a Socialist party based on the Marxian principles of social economy among the Hawaiian aborigines, or Ainu race in the northern extremity of Japan! But it would not be an out-of-place subject when we talk of establishing a Social Democratic State in a country where the industry is conducted in the most civilised manner, and its existing government a limited constitutional monarchy of rather an advanced type.'

This is from the *Labour World*, now or lately 'Sole Organ of Labour and Socialism in Japan'; from the two of its pages which are printed in an English language. The *Labour World* also tells you, in the same English language, that 'Socialists in Japan have been oppressed, their writings, speeches are severely censured without least consideration. Their meetings are supervised as if they were of criminals.'

Relatively speaking, the English language of the *Labour World* of Tokyo is good. It has its meaning. Much English is written and printed in Japan of which the drift is very obscure. The vision or the candour of

the *Labour World* is more at fault than its English. The 'sole organ of Labour and Socialism in Japan' should know its arch enemy better than to write of it as 'a limited constitutional monarchy of rather an advanced type.' But this ignorance—it is nigh impossible to take it for sophistry—is instructive, and one feels the need of a clue when following up the trail of Japanese Socialism. This ignorance bewrays it. It bewrays it more than its English speech. If I must give Japanese Socialism a place in this record, I must classify it, determine its species. To do this I have to identify it, to distinguish its markings. I make a fair beginning when I light upon 'a limited constitutional monarchy of rather an advanced type,' which, by token of the *Labour World*, 'sole organ,' etc., is Japanese Socialism's notion of its enemy. To achieve my final scientific result I record my first scientific observation: 'Japanese Socialism does not know its enemy'; logical inferences: 'Japanese Socialism does not know its mission; does not know Japan; does not know itself; does not know what is Socialism; it knows nothing; it does not exist.'

Whiff! My investigation is complete. I have classified Japanese Socialism. I have 'reduced' it. Biologically I have placed the specimen in the museum, mounted and labelled it. It is as it were nothing, and I have so marked it. A clean, quick, skilful piece of work, redounding highly to my credit!

This is one way, to be sure, of disposing of Japanese Socialism, and I am not sure, in all honesty, that it is not, for the present, the just, that is to say, the scientific way. I feel that merely to announce Japanese Socialism is to affirm a phenomenon, as if the spread of Hegelianism in Morocco were to be stated, or of Hedonism

in Hell. To discuss it in detail were to build a superstructure of argument on a quibble, to draw out a philosophy from a half-truth. With all design of candour I yield up here my persuasion that, in the present Japanese ensemble—an extraordinary ensemble of Beauty and Chaos—Japanese Socialism is nothing. By way of qualification let me say that it is next to nothing, meaning that to-morrow, or the day after, it may be next to something.

It is, nevertheless, certain that in the summer of 1901 the Home Department of the Japanese Government took certain action as to socialist organisations in Japan and their publications. The Department, let us put it, took action contemplating the control or contingent repression of nothing. Other Departments of the Japanese Government have been known to do a like thing.

It is also certain that in April 1902 there was a 'Labour Demonstration' in Tokyo. I have before me a report of the speeches. I notice from the account that a newspaper of Tokyo, in order to promote its connection, had organised a 'social gathering' of labourers. The report of the 'Demonstration' states that it, the 'Demonstration,' was held to protest against the police prohibition of the aforementioned 'social gathering.' So it seems the 'Demonstration' was a demonstration of nothing—at any rate of nothing relating to the vital import of our word Labour, with its capital L. We are again, in fact, come upon nothing.

But the report of the 'Demonstration' states that one speaker 'urged the necessity of waging successful war against the Government'; also that another 'characterised the Government as regarding the labourers as

if they were beasts,' and the officials 'as caring nothing but to buy the goodwill of capitalists, who spent their money and time on riotous living.' It is the language of Socialism, or, at the least, the language of Labourism. Here we come upon something — the language of Labourism from one man, possibly from two. They are like the *Labour World;* they do not know their enemy. But, like the *Labour World*, they say something. Hence, when affirming that in the Japanese ensemble Japanese Socialism is not, I guard myself with the qualification that to-morrow or the day following it may be.

I go on to mention that there is, or was yesterday, a Socialist Association in Tokyo, and I fear that by this mention I tell an untruth. I mean that even the Socialist Association is nothing, or next to nothing. Still, I mention that it exists, or existed when I was last in Tokyo, and I thereby assume the responsibility of a possible untruth, since of some things it may be said that though they exist they do not live.

There is even a philosophic Socialism in Japan. Here is a Japanese philosophic Socialist's formulated scheme :—'(1) The institution of a compulsory life insurance system for the workers ; (2) special fees for medical advice to workers ; (3) the establishment of a bureau for the proper distribution of labour ; (4) prevention of the diminution of the agricultural class by improvements of the land tenure system.' This has a serious, therefore formidable, appearance, but again I assure you it is necessary to believe that it is nothing, or next to nothing.

My case, my scientific result, is sufficiently stated and finally proved in a judicious Tokyo newspaper of April 8, 1903, which says of Japanese Socialism :—

'With [some] apparent practical vitality we may safely state that Socialism is in this country still in the stage of academic discussion, and that the day when it will assume practical significance is as yet, if such a day is ever to come, in the far distant future.'

I replace the specimen in the museum, having verified the label. Nevertheless, I go away remembering that the *Labour World* and two men of Tokyo have used the speech of Socialism.

Now, in this that I have written, I have viewed Japanese Socialism subjectively, or nearly so. Objectively I find it impossible to view it. If subjectively it is next to nothing, objectively it is less than nothing. More, it is, I think, a jest. I think of a comfortable, sonsy, Scotch farmer's wife proposing to wear the hairy shirt of penance for imagined sins, and I merely laugh. So I laugh when I think of Socialism in Japan, objectively. In this lovely, smiling land, whose people eat Beauty, where men are turned from unbeautiful vices by sudden visions of the autumn moon—'converted' by the mute eloquence of the beauty of the world?[1] In this land where every dale and grove has its nymph or goblin, where every fox is a devil, and every street has its astrologer? It is not possible. Objectively, Japanese Socialism is first a jest; secondly, it is impossible.

Perhaps the sober way to look at it, to deal with it, is by association. Associate it with the Revolution and you account for it, for the nothing there is of it. Better still, associate it with the Japanese plutocracy and you more than account for it. You then reduce it to

[1] In an issue of September 1900 of the *Shinano Mainichi Shimbun* (*Shinano Daily News*) there is this advertisement: 'The absence of the moon on the mid-autumnal night impressed me strongly, and I hereby pledge myself to drink no more.' It is grotesque, but is it not somewhat like the restraints of sacred memories among us?

what it is—to nothing. Take the Japanese plutocracy and the Japanese ochlocracy—take them together, bring them together, and like warring essences in the crucible, they annihilate each other.

For there is no Japanese plutocracy, and there being none, Japanese Socialism is deprived of its cause—that is to say, it does not exist; or existing, exists only as an imported germ of philosophic Socialism whose father is an Idea—an imported Idea.

In Japan there are men who have made money, but none who want the world to know it. Not long since a Toyko newspaper made a census of the rich men of the land. In a population of 45,000,000 there are, it seems, some thirty men who may be worth £200,000; there are some 450 who possess not less than £50,000. There are, then, rich men — an indistinguishable peppering of them among 45,000,000 who are rich in contentment—but there is not a plutocracy. The rich man in Japan is, strangely enough, as content as the poor man; he does not, that is to say, use his riches to nourish and inflame an immeasurable discontent. He goes along in his quiet, unostentatious way, just as if he were poor. 'Which of us,' asks the English editor of an English newspaper in Japan, who has been thirty years there,—'which of us knows of even one very wealthy Japanese who makes a parade of his riches or devotes his money to purposes of glitter and display?' The question is a fine testimony to the wealthy men of Japan. The why of it is not a mystery. It is part of the social canon of Old Japan which named ostentation a sin. Here the old social canon has resisted the Revolution. The Revolution has not crowned itself with the crown of a swaggering plutocracy. Japan, retaining too much of her good manners, imposes a

hardship on her rich men ; they cannot appear rich even if they would.

What then follows? There is not yet a Japanese plutocracy. How then can there be an ochlocracy? Sociology has its laws of compensation even in Japan, amid the Japanese Revolution. Apart from questions of intelligence, of education in advanced European theories of social equity, apart also from questions of an inherited predisposition of contentment, the fabric of society, even in Japan, must conform to the postulates of architectural science. The fabric of Japanese society, having put out no plutocratic wing on the one side, should exhibit no ochlocratic extension on the other. And so it is.

There is, again, the Japanese aristocracy. There is a Japanese aristocracy, and there is not. If there be no plutocracy and no ochlocracy, in a different sense there is no Japanese aristocracy. In the first place, the Japanese aristocracy died thirty years ago by its own hand, for which it should be for ever remembered by Japan and the world. There is no greater act in history, I firmly believe, than the self-immolation of the Japanese aristocracy thirty odd years ago. It was necessary, but it was no less noble. It was complete. They were princes, rulers over their own people, in their own capitals. They gave themselves to be pensioners, they consented to imprisonment—to be private gentlemen in the suburbs of Tokyo who had administered the power of life and death in moated castles set in the midst of fair provinces. Out of their death sprang the new life of Japan. Their immolation was more than noble ; it was useful in an absolute sense.

A remnant of this Aristocracy, which gave up its life for that of a nation, remains. Its castles survive

throughout the country, phantoms of a recent yet remote Feudal Age. The moats are still deep and full, and the cyclopean walls, which their waters lave, are unbroken. Even the stucco of the high corner towers, with their double tilted-eave roofs, walls through which it seems you might have thrust a fist when they were new—their stucco yet gleams starch-white afar in sunny country prospects. Abandoned but yesterday, when their lords and ladies left for the Tokyo suburbs, so that their mere presence in their old haunts of power should not distract the peasant's eye from the new vision of national life—abandoned but yesterday, the castles of the Japanese aristocracy were yet, as it seems, given up to ruin ages ago. An epoch, a cycle, has passed since armed men leaned on their parapets. Yet it is a cycle of but thirty years.

It is somewhat so with the Japanese aristocracy. They are dead, but, as you might say, they were living yesterday. On great occasions what survives of them —the remnant—is seen or heard fluttering about the steps of the throne. Some puissant barons of old, their identity hidden beneath bright new titles of nobility, conferred by the Revolution, discuss matters for legislation in the Upper House of the Japanese Parliament. One reads in Japanese newspapers that, as if in unmanly remorse of their great sacrifice, they now spend their last vitalities in frightful vices. Let us prefer to remember the grandeur of the sacrifice they made upon the altar of patriotism.

There remains in opposition to a potential Japanese Democracy what I must horribly call a Mediocracy. They are the captains, secretaries, administrators, retainers of the dead Aristocracy when it was a living Princedom. They are these or their sons. The

servants, the right-hand men, the centurions of the old Aristocracy before its self-immolation, they are now by way of becoming a new Aristocracy. It is they who govern. They are the ruling Oligarchy. Of them are Ito, Okuma, Yamagata, Matsukata, the present Prime Minister, and most of the others, Japanese statesmen or soldiers, of whom the world hears or has heard. They are also Japanese officialdom.

This Mediocracy holds its head high. It cuts plutocracy—potential plutocracy—dead, and often looks for ochlocracy through a microscope. If pride and high disdain be anywhere or at any time just, this mediocracy is perhaps justified, for it is they who have raised the fabric of the Japan of the Revolution on the ground which the old Aristocracy prepared with its bones. They are able men; they, chiefly, are the brain of Japan, and therefore perhaps its future. Above all, they are patriots, though proud.

Yet it is almost to be regretted that this Mediocracy should be so completely necessary. Were the case otherwise, there might have been a Japanese Democracy —at the least a Japanese Democracy in the making. I mean that as Japan is already a Nationality; that, as a doctrine of Nationality, not indeed strictly of a kind with that which bore United Italy and Confederated Germany, is already admitted, expressed, embodied, in the Japanese nation, the nation is already a potential Democracy, though adoring an Emperor, permitting a Mediocracy, and ruled by an Oligarchy. Here, it may be, my possible touches the borders of the fantastic. Yet Japan, as it stands to the rest of the world, is more than a Nationality. It is a Family, with many of the instincts, much of the exclusiveness, something of the fundamentally democratic sense and order of the

Family. Its very patriotism, beholding a god-emperor, divine father of the land ; its very worship of ancestors ; are family traits, established, operating in the national circle.

There may not here be a potential Democracy, but if not there may be a new political order for which we have no name ; an order in which there is no plutocracy and no ochlocracy, in which aristocracy has died by its own hand, in which only a mediocracy, necessary from the circumstances of the moment, stands clearly apart or above the general order. Shall we, in Japan, once, and but thirty years ago, caste-ridden as if by law of nature, see, for the first time in history, a nation without classes?

## XXIV

## EDUCATION WITHOUT A CANON

The Japanese schoolboy is a very engaging little fellow. Almost always he is learning English, so, as you pass him in the streets of Tokyo, the capital, or even in the streets of a one-horse provincial town, he will very probably shout a 'Goo-dè' to you, which, upon reflection, you perceive to be the standard greeting of your own country. The Japanese schoolboy is by no means backward at a venture with his English. He likes to see the foreigner's smile of recognition, and all foreigners are English to him. Upon invitation he will with great eagerness enter into a conversation with you upon the basis of his vocabulary of a score of words and six exclamatory idioms. The conversation is, doubtless, rather fragmentary, but his smile, his 'aliveness,' and his fine teeth are your entertainment. His is to exhaust upon you his vocabulary of words and idioms, and this he does without relevance to the topic you have introduced. Nevertheless, seeing him, you may well reflect that the Educational Canon in Japan has an excellent 'subject,' if it have nothing else. This stuff should turn to gold in the hands of the administrators of the Canon. It is, in fact, already gold.

The Japanese schoolboy is an eager fellow, of a

lively temper; his 'mentality,' as you may observe on the streets of Tokyo, is quick and responsive. One makes further inquiry among the authorities, and the impressions of the street are fully confirmed. Says one (I here quote the written testimony of a cultured Englishman, an erstwhile teacher of the youth of the country): 'He is eager, earnest, zealous, hungry for knowledge, full of patriotic purpose.' 'He is the schoolmaster's delight,' says Professor Chamberlain, the first authority, 'quiet, intelligent, deferential, studious almost to excess,'—this more particularly of the student, who mayhap has lost the Japanese schoolboy's delightful gait of irresponsibility. 'Yet withal,' Mr. Chamberlain tells you, 'he is a rebel.' And one finds it so. There is a passion of revolt in the breast of the Japanese schoolboy. Barrings-out are his business, it seems, learning his recreation. He would be his own teacher, his own professor; possibly his own Minister of Education. It is perhaps only a passing symptom; it is certain that in these days one may not usually scan a Japanese newspaper without encountering some chronicle of a schoolboy 'strike.' Its *raison* may be anything. It may be some sudden psychological umbrage at a member of the teaching staff; or a grievance relating to the new 'Reader'; or the class, having made progress in the English alphabet, desires instant introduction to the works of Lord Macaulay, a course to which the teacher of English has his public and private objections. It would be unfair to put too serious an interpretation on the boy's contempt of authority; perhaps it is but the defect of his excellent zeal and prompt enthusiasm. It is established that he is first of all eager. His eagerness, one finds, is of the quality of the educational 'atmosphere' of the country;

it is part of it ; possibly the source of it ; at any rate it is of the same origin. Become intimate with the Japanese schoolboy's quality of eagerness, and you have in a measure found the Japanese educational Idea, the country's educational soul. Qualify the quality with mention of its nearest kin and you get as complete a characterisation of the Educational Canon in Japan as is perhaps possible : eagerness ; dissatisfaction with things as they are ; desire of new things ; the capacity for experiment ; volatility ; inconstancy. This, nearly, is the Educational Canon of the country. The Japanese, it is certain, apply—unconsciously perhaps—this great truth about the canon in education,—the truth that first of all there is no canon.

It would not be very wonderful, when you think of it, to find a fine frenzy of education in Japan. One may scarcely, indeed, say that it quite amounts to this. There is an enthusiasm of education, but it is not a steady flame. It will burn fiercely to-day, so that all the eloquent tongues of the land wag with eager colloquy on the uses, aims, defects, qualities ; the past, the present, the future, of the national education. To-morrow the debate will turn on the economic situation, or the revival of the classical drama. There is an enthusiasm of education, but it has to take its turn with others. It is well—perhaps well enough—that it should have its turn with others, yet it would not be surprising if education should be the grand passion in Japan. The Revolution, the metamorphosis of the last half century, has been no other than a sort of miraculously rapid process of education. The nation has been herded into the school of European ideas, manners, customs, methods ; European thought, European reason, European ideals. It has been required to learn in fifty years or less what all

Europe has spent a thousand years and much bloody agony in acquiring. If this tremendous ordeal has been kindly accepted, what more natural than to expect the nation to have passed into a sort of educational ecstasy? The ordeal might have been terrible enough to induce a less admirable madness in a people of another mind than the Japanese. But their sanity has undoubtedly survived, and they might therefore most reasonably be expected to emerge a nation of educational zealots—a nation of priests of the noblest of human cults.

In a manner it is so, but with many qualifications. One qualification—one of the important qualifications—is that the nation has as yet by no means mastered the text-book of European civilisation to which its leaders introduced it forty or fifty years ago. Mastering this text-book in forty years, the Japanese might by now have become a nation of slaves of the passion of education—the passion of learning; they might have presented to the world the unique spectacle of a nation of one mind in living but to learn. This achievement—who knows?—might have given us a people devoured by a master aim, an aim of knowing, of learning, of inquiry, of culture, of light, of illumination. But, save by a group of acuter minds, the text-book of European civilisation is not yet mastered in Japan. Hence there is only a group who may be said to be 'possessed' by the educational Idea as by a grand aim. With them it is a habit, an enthusiasm, a gospel, very nearly a religion. Being the leaders, as by natural right, or in the ranks immediately behind the leaders, this group counts for much, for everything, so that sometimes they make it to appear that Japan's policy, Japan itself, as it were, is expressed or summed up in a single word—Education.

The periodical literature of the country periodically teems with their discussions of the country's educational problems, or discussions inspired by them, or by their acts. The educational specialist from Europe arriving in Tokyo at particular junctures finds that he can there breathe an atmosphere of academic and practical educational 'agitation' as native, as refreshing to his nostrils, as any he may find in London or even Oxford or Heidelberg. At such seasons Japan appears to be one political party, one ethical group—a party which has adopted Education as the whole of politics, a group which has agreed that Education is the whole of Ethics. In these days, too, there is an extraordinary crop of Educational Societies all over the land, each possibly with a special, exclusive programme and policy of its own. The appearance is somewhat deceptive, however. There may be—it is probably safe to aver that there is—in Japan an educational cult composed of some enlightened spirits who give to the educational Idea a constant and unswerving devotion ; men who have graduated with or without distinction at Oxford, Cambridge, Yale, Harvard, Heidelberg, Paris, and who, in addition, are intense patriots, and have convinced themselves that the gospel of education in the Japan of to-day is the highest patriotism. These, however, are not the Japanese people, of whom all that may perhaps be said is that the upheaval of the past half-century, in its effect upon their temperament from the standpoint of education, has communicated an unrest of ideas, manifested in much curiosity and great eagerness about the 'new things' from abroad. This curiosity, this eagerness, makes the Japanese schoolboy stuff of gold, but as the schoolboy grows, Orientalism crowds his daily life, and convenience and the law of self-preservation require

many surrenders to it. Moreover, the cult of leaders is lamentably short of funds.

Nevertheless, Japan is so much in the hands, or at the feet, of its leaders that a generalisation is almost permissible in this matter, such as this, namely, that the national attitude towards education is excellent in respect of its exhibiting the supreme virtue of dissatisfaction with past achievement and present attainment. This is, of course, in the very spirit of education—the spirit itself. It means, let it be repeated, that the nation has learned the one great truth about the educational canon —the truth that there is none. It means that the Revolution is safe ; that it is still at work ; that reaction, or even a stoppage, is impossible. The writings and speeches of leaders on educational questions, if these should be taken as disclosing the mind of the country, assure us that Japan is at least on the right road. For the most plausible interpretation of these is that there never was a people less satisfied with themselves and their accomplishments than the Japanese. Says Baron Sone, Minister of Finance, or Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a review article : 'Artificiality is the characteristic of our education to-day. It all looks very well on paper, but there is a lack of thoroughness and reality about it. . . . Our learning, after all, is mostly ornamental. . . . Our students' heads may be full of lofty ideas, but unfortunately the fate of nations is not dependent on a supply of philosophers.' Baron Kikuchi, ex-Minister of Education, graduate of Cambridge, and ex-President of the Imperial University of Tokyo, in a speech as Minister of Education, says : 'We are beset by the evil of excessive cramming. . . . In most of our elementary schools the books are galloped through, pupils being required to write down as much as possible

of what falls from the teachers' lips. . . . Our general methods of teaching have this great drawback that they fail to establish a connection between the mind of the teacher and the minds of the students.' Mr. Ozaki Yukio, a radical patriot, is convinced that 'educationally we are on the wrong track.' He assigns causes for the evils of his finding: '(1) The influence of Chinese learning; (2) the habits begotten by Feudalism which still remain; (3) the worship of officialdom and contempt for the callings of ordinary citizens; (4) lack of ambition and enterprise, and general narrowness of view.' Mr. Ozaki charges his country's educational *régime* with a cardinal sin: he says it is unpractical.

It is just, however, to state the position in another way. Is it not well, is it not at any rate fairly well, with a people who judge themselves so hardly as these? May it not be said of them that educationally they are safe because they are dissatisfied? Not that the mass of the people are permeated by this saving discontent, but it seems their chiefs are, and the chiefs in this matter are the people and their future. Fundamentally it is well with the canon, so called; for the capacity of self-examination, which the chiefs exhibit, guarantees revision, reform, progress. Hence the indictments of Japanese education—the educational *régime*—which might be drawn in abundance by mere reproduction of the speeches and writings of Japanese notables, argue the best about it. They are a healthy symptom. If they were true they might be the only healthy symptom, for their various damnation might be quoted against the *régime* in its totality, root and branch. The indictments, however, do not agree; one will charge that the *régime* is over-practical, another aver that it is under-practical. We may infer that it has its good points in

addition to its excellent and saving capacity of self-examination.

Doubtless, in the absence or negation of an educational canon, there is an inherent liability to inconstancy, diffusion of energies, indirection. Denial of a canon excuses the vogue of all theories and authorises the promulgation of every kind of view; it menaces ideals and reverses policies; were demagogy powerful in Japan it might commit the sacred ark to the care of a charlatan or a mountebank. Here, however, the oligarchical rule of the country guards from loss—from grave loss at any rate; the oligarchy alone is powerful, and it strikes the keynote upon which the educational cultus must write its themes. This keynote is emancipation from all the baser bondage of Orientalism. This is the one positive canon in the philosophy of Japanese educationists. This is the one exception, the one limit, to experiment. It is the high justification of all experiment. It is at the same time the most serious disability of the educationists, for there is sometimes sharp conflict of opinion as to what things are of the baser bondage of Orientalism.

So it follows that the very canon—or lack of canon—which is the great propitious sign in Japanese education has the inner significance of a critical predicament, an awkward dilemma, for the educationists. 'We want and mean to have the best within our power,' is the language of the cultus, inspired by the oligarchy, but 'What is the best?' is their question. It is better and it is worse to have a canon. It might be better for Japan could her educationists irrevocably decide what things are the baser bondage of Orientalism, and what things of the same Orientalism are worthy. In this decision there is the future of Japan—the future of her modern era, the stability of her Revolution. Japanese

education—the *régime*, the policy—is beset by a continuing problem of what Orientalism is good and worthy of preservation, and what is bad and unworthy. There is a sort of complementary problem,—what of Europeanism is proven good and worthy of adoption, and what proven ill and therefore already condemned. These are not historical problems in Japan ; they are problems which arise now, and must perplex Japanese educationists of the future, and Japanese statesmen of the future. The past was, in this aspect, obvious and axiomatic. Up to a certain point it could be, it must be, Europeanism—this only. The past was easy ; it held no problem. Orientalism, as the ruling code, at any rate as all the code, spirit and substance, became impossible. Nowadays, however, the question arises : May Europeanism be all the code, spirit and substance—*can* it be with Japanese origins in Orientalism, and the good of some part of Europeanism still doubtful ? It is a problem of the Statesmanship as well as of the Education of the country.

For instance, of recent years the problem has taken peremptory shape in one great question for decision—Shall we abandon Chinese ideographic writing ? The party which regards ideographic writing as a baser Orientalism says in effect that its maintenance means that the Japanese child spends and will spend five or six years in learning its alphabet—the A B C wherewith it reads and writes. There is, however, a party which sees in Chinese character-writing an Orientalism of great educational virtue. It is, they say, a fine discipline of the mind and a fundamental culture comparable in worth to the Greek and Latin languages in the European scheme of a liberal education. This is the problem, the educational dilemma, in concrete shape. It takes

other forms—it arises in other most practical and pertinent questions, which essentially are questions for a decision between Europeanism and Orientalism. Sometimes advanced theorists raise the question in this large form : 'Ought we not to teach the whole art and practice of Europeanism in our schools ?' One able parliamentarian and budding statesman writes in this wise for instance : 'In Japan children are regarded as existing for the sake of their parents, as their special property, as at their disposal to a very large extent. Every effort is made to keep up the dependence of the child on its parent for as long a time as possible. In England the great object of parents is to make their children, especially their boys, independent as soon as possible. . . . But the Japanese parent is full of the past and never wearies of relating to his children what the good old ancestors thought and said, and how the sons and daughters of days gone by revered their fathers and mothers and remained subject to them all their days. . . . The Anglo-Saxon boy goes out into the world with self-confidence and courage and does battle with his competitors. Compared with the go-ahead Anglo-Saxon youth, our young men scarcely appear young ; their lethargy savours of old age.' Here the question, simply put, is this : 'Does not much of the baser part of Orientalism still drag our educational wheels ?'

So it is clear that if the educational Idea in Japan be unfettered by a canon, it is, on the other hand, apt to be perplexed by a problem—the problem, namely, to what extent it is desirable and beneficial to neglect or reject all canons. There is a quasi-canon which decrees the rejection of all hurtful Orientalism—and, conversely, the retention of what of good there may be of it—and the adoption of all beneficial Europeanism.

This pseudo-canon has been of easy interpretation, and has been inspired with marvellous rapidity in the past; but in these times it presents critical occasions for a fine faculty of selection. The cult whose highest patriotism is a policy of education has a magnificent, nay, a unique opportunity. It seems they need also unique gifts.

I have said the cult is lamentably short of funds. So it is. There are between 26,000 and 27,000 elementary schools with an average pupil-roll of between 150 and 160. The annual expenditure per school is but £65. There are 64,000 teachers—95,000 or 96,000 is the needed strength—who, over all, are paid less than £15 per annum. The Japanese pedagogue is required to make great sacrifices for his country's naval and military prestige, and he does it, obscurely, yet often with a shining virtue.

## XXV

## THE HIGH SCHOOL GIRL

It was Exhibition Day at the brand-new Women's University, raised in the midst of an umbrageous pleasaunce on the western skirts of Tokyo—a day of sun, of light, of colour, of breezy, exhilarating brilliance, in the autumn of 1902. Days of rain had made bogs of roads, but we walked by proxy, paying jinrikisha-pullers to be our vicarious sacrifice to the gods of pure mud.

Our tickets mentioned early forenoon for the opening, which was quite Japanese. In Japan they make a day of it, not an afternoon or an evening. You rise early to go to your Japanese garden-party. Your picnic or 'social meeting' may begin at 9.30 or 10 A.M., and you are back home in mid-afternoon. Even in winter your card of invitation to the various feast which resident foreigners irreverently designate a 'geisha spree'—essentially an evening entertainment—mentions 5 or 5.30 P.M. as the hour of assembly; though, in truth, if you obey the letter of the invitation, you must receive and entertain yourself for an hour or two before the arrival of your host or hosts at the appointed temple of Bacchus at the unappointed hour.

It was indeed even so at the brand-new Women's

University. Doubtless punctuality as a womanly virtue is preached; but apparently we expected too much when we looked for it to be practised on Exhibition Day. We calculated to arrive upon an item well down the long 'Programme of Exercises,'—in fact, we spent quite a while discovering a lively but somewhat irrelevant admiration of the environs of the Women's University. The Women's University we did not admire. That was not possible. One does not admire a wooden barn, even if double-storied and variegated with rows of windows, five feet by three. But one admires the façade of a row of grown Japanese cedars; and the scent of a pine-grove is half-romantic, because it was one of the enjoyments of our far-off romantic forebears, whose instincts are our romances.

No, you would not say that the Women's University in Tokyo—which is not called the Japanese Women's College of Liberty, or Hall of Emancipation, but may prove to be either or both,—you would not say that it is architecturally handsome, or even architecturally substantial; you would only say that it is finely situated amid the beauty of trees and green swards which belongs to both sexes, even in Japan.

There were great cedars and pines and green lawns, but, especially for this day, there was a high fence of shingles enclosing a piece of the grounds, half the size of a football pitch. And there were Venetian poles and streamers along the fence, and draperies about the gate, all to impress upon us that it was a 'gala occasion,' for which the majesty of noble trees is never majestic enough even in Japan, and the green of the grass and the sapphire of the sky not anything like a sufficient colour scheme.

We entered the enclosure in the press of a very

great throng. Everywhere, except in the sky and in the trees, was the modern Japanese High School girl. You see her frequently in the streets of Tokyo, and, almost as modern, in the streets of those provincial cities where she has a High School. But she is never obtrusively prominent upon the streets. Here, however, she was everywhere—in a state of high excitement, it seemed, from the way she darted hither and thither with messages from and to the stewards of the day. She eyed us half-shyly, I thought almost coquettishly; us foreigners, big, brazen, red-haired, yet, by all accounts, wonderfully considerate to our women-folk—mines of the new learning to which she, the High School girl, was being introduced, and withal, no doubt very rich. She seemed to smile at thought of our coming to see her feats in our sisters' accomplishments.

She was everywhere, I say. She filled tiers of seats round two sides of the enclosure; she was going and coming in swarms, in and out at the gate, about and around us. She wore no hat—she never does. She was not in Japanese dress, save occasionally; nor yet in European, save very occasionally. She wore, as she nearly always does now—even from the time when she is only an elementary school girl,—a maroon skirt, coming to a little below the knee, and a blouse-bodice of white or mauve or dove-grey, or any not too garish tint; also laced boots and black stockings. As to her bodice-blouse and her skirt, she is half-Japanese, half-European. As to her laced boots and black stockings, she is entirely European, for no compromise betwixt the European boot or shoe and the Japanese clog has yet been found for her. On the whole she is, as to her dress, a cross, a hybrid; not ungraceful, nor at all the

last word on female attire. As to her face, figure, deportment, manner, what are they, what do they express? Something extraordinary! She is tall and big for her age; her cheeks are full and plump, and the hybrid skirt permits a glance at fine rounded calves. She is, I am persuaded, as tall as our High School girl, but plumper. This alone is remarkable, extraordinary; for the full-grown Japanese race, especially its women-folk, is smaller by half a head than we are. Then her complexion, oftener than not, is clear almost to white; pigmented, as often as not, with a delicate, finely-graded peach-bloom. This too is remarkable, extraordinary; for the grown Japanese man is yellow or copper brown; the Japanese woman yellow like parchment, or yellow like glazier's putty. But she is more besides tall and plump and clear-complexioned. I am persuaded—from more observation than there was opportunity for on Exhibition Day at the Women's University, Tokyo—I am persuaded there is coquetry in her eye. There is, at any rate, incriminating evidence. You look, and the lids drop like the shutter of a camera. You look away and look again, and again they drop like the shutter of a camera. Eyes don't do this for nothing. I am persuaded it is coquetry, warring, perhaps, with an overpowering canon of pudency, partly taught in the High Schools, partly original, that is, inherent. Even so, it is remarkable, extraordinary, for the grown Japanese woman—the Japanese wife, especially—is not only pudency, she is effacement—self-extinction. I think I have shown her to you as wife in her husband's house. And this coquettish eye is her daughter's, meaning her own, for to-morrow the High School girl will be wife. But more; this High School

girl is lithe, active; you would say, seeing her on the streets of Tokyo, almost athletic; athletic without qualification, you would say, on Exhibition Day at the Women's University, Tokyo. She talks with animation, almost she chatters; and in these University grounds she runs and bobs and darts. It is remarkable, extraordinary; for the Japanese wife is a study in passivity, almost a study in still life; she speaks when spoken to, not else. Clearly there is a mystery somewhere. This Japanese High School girl, tall, plump, romping, glib, coquettish, eupeptic—behold her and, remembering the Japanese wife, agree with me that she is something extraordinary—she or the wife.

The type-written 'Programme of Exercises' put in our hands ran to thirty-two items. I am not to take you through the programme. I have already given the best digest of it I can manage in introducing you to the High School girl, by courtesy, University Student, who was its 'executant.' I find on reference to it that we saw such things as 'Hoop Drill,' 'Wooden Ring Play,' 'Poem-composing,' 'Cookery Race,' 'Kasumi-no-Fuji,' 'Umbrellar Drill,' 'Bicylcle Race with Ball,' 'Vegitable Dcll,' and a great many more which the typewriter spelt correctly, notwithstanding the last three of those I have quoted. It was all done to 'Yankee Doodle,' 'Washington Post,' and others such, on a piano from which all the music had been beaten long, long ago—all save the correct time, which the Japanese drill-instructor, in a shiny morning coat, took from it, in spite of its neck. And it was all done, it seemed to me, with perfect success, except, perhaps, at the 'lawn-tennis' item, when one plump little girl, intending a strong spoon-stroke, threw her

racket high in the air and ran after it with a blushing, shameful laugh on her face. I think also that 'Bicycle Polo' was a bit of a fizzle. On the other hand, I have a bright memory of a charming Maypole dance, and I recollect a 'Fan Dance' with stately onerous curtseys, like those of our very great-grandfathers and grandmothers in the minuet.

But I confess my eyes chiefly saw the High School girl, tall to eupeptic as before, and not so much her feats of the day, remarkable as these were. We saw her class-rooms and her living-room-dormitory when she is a boarder—a superbly clean, mat-covered little place, opening backwards on a corridor, frontwards on the sun, with two little cabinet dressing-tables—strangely, almost plaintively, foreign in their Japanese setting—and nick-nacks and school books for two, there being two boarders to a room.

It was a great day, the sun shining in a breezy, radiant, turquoise sky to the tail of afternoon, and I never wish to add a brighter picture to the gallery of memory than that which I and my friend took away with us when the great hedge-like row of cryptomeria came between us and the Women's University, Tokyo, as our jinrikisha-pullers escaped from the crowd.

Nevertheless, the picture sets me a problem. It presents me a mystery—one more. There is a link missing, an hiatus, a void, a large point of interrogation. Take it as a point of interrogation and its place is in the space between the Japanese High School girl and the Japanese wife, the wife who, when you visit her husband, is kin to the monochrome crane on the sliding wall, who, in public places, walks eight or ten paces behind her wedded husband, the wife whose consistent,

consuming purpose in life is self-effacement. Is there not a problem ?

There is and there is not, for the problem is in reality a collision—a collision of two Codes, two Canons, two Civilisations. Japan is filled with the noise and sometimes with the disaster of this collision. It is the collision which I have already named a hundred times —the collision of the Old Order and the New. In the case of the Japanese High School girl and the Japanese wife it is a collision in which the High School girl is annihilated, a collision in which the Old Order extinguishes the New. In other words, the Revolution, though it leagues with a charming conspirator, the High School girl, succumbs before the old Japanese canon of wifely conduct and manners—the canon whose crowning dogma is self-effacement.

'A model wife,' says one of the foremost of Japan's novelists of the day, 'must be the daughter of parents entertaining an affectionate regard towards each other, and she must be brought up amidst affectionate domestic care. She must be educated. Not that her education must necessarily be scientific, or literary, but it must be such as to enable her to write letters in a tolerably good hand, and read newspapers in Chinese character. There are some who hold that lack of cleverness in a woman is in itself a virtue. The observation is not unreasonable, for indeed a shrewd woman is a very troublesome being. A wife devoid of obedience and gentleness will not prove a good partner. Spiritual excellence is the most lasting attraction in a wife.'

Moreover, as I have told you, the Japanese wife is expected to walk ten paces or more behind her husband to-day even as from time immemorial. And to-day she does it ; she keeps her distance.

The Women's University and the Japanese High School for girls are no doubt great workers for the Revolution. But even the wife herself begins to be her own ally. Lately a Japanese farmer ordered his spouse, the daughter of a doctor, to come into the fields and,—by all the Japanese powers !—do her share of the work. She declined, and he incontinently divorced her for disobedience—that is to say, he intimated to the local registrar that she was no longer his wife. The lady demurred and claimed damages for divorce without sufficient cause. One court upheld the husband : the Supreme Court quashed their decision, and ruled that a wife is not under obligation to meet her husband's 'unreasonable' demands. So it is possible that a little cloud, no bigger than a woman's hand, is rising in the Japanese husband's prospect, and of course the Women's University, Tokyo,—it doesn't pray that the cloud may roll by.

## XXVI

## THE RECORD OF AN EXPERIENCE

On a weeping day of September I crossed many bogs in the streets of Tokyo to see a great sight ; at any rate hoping—against some sceptic, derisive questionings—to see this great sight.

You must know that there are moods which fall upon all children of the West whose destiny is prolonged among the children of the East—from Port Said to Tokyo—moods of a sudden, strenuous, terrible yearning, when the heart, as it were, sweats with a labour of heaving, with profound pulsations which come from the deeps, and rise even to a man's visible, watery eyes. This is the revolt of the Western soul ; its nausea ; its sickening. It is its quick, flaming insurrection against the East—all the East, all the peoples of the East ; all the skies, mountains, seas of the East ; the sun of the East, the twilight of the East, its black midnight ; the very splendour of the East ; its very dross. A company of three men, or two, or four, are sitting in the verandah of the East, talking in ordinary conventional tones of yesterday's tennis, and the dubious fame of Mrs. A. and Mr. B. The thick, sticky Eastern night obtrudes ever the verandah balustrade, like an intangible wall of black gas, out of which strange insects appear, as yellow, wiry streaks, flashing into the

light of the verandah ; mosquitoes with them, atomic elfs of hell, blowing minute horns. The conversation is reasonably irregular ; a man answers his fellow after a decided pause ; in the quiet of the night, in the big silence of its great maw, into which the verandah looks, the human voice has an abrupt, rapping resonance which is unfamiliar because it is neither the resonance of a closed chamber nor the resonance of the open. The talk drifts, drags, dies ; weary, overcome. The eyes of the men seek the night and a star, and out of the star and out of the night a phantom comes. It may be swift, so that one man may wink at his star and see the phantom when the eyelid returns to its socket. It may be slow, so that his fellow may see it slowly shape and stir in the near blackness of the night. A word may summon it—as 'Home,' 'London,' 'Chamberlain.' It may be the child of nothing ; the twinkling star may send it. This apparition is hell, and it is heaven. It is the phantom of the Insurrection. When it appears men put a hand over their eyes, and gird their hearts. Sometimes they move about, the pain being more readily softened by physical activity. Sometimes they thump old airs out of old pianos, with notes as flat as flounders from Eastern dews. It is men who are not long of the East who see this apparition frequently, but even to the man who has not heard the roar of London for thirty years, to the 'Old hands,' it comes, and when it comes to them, it is not unlike the pains of Death. To the others—to the new hands—it is a kind of horrible pleasure—a rack of joy, a thrilling crucifixion.

Well, then, as I have said, I crossed many bogs in Tokyo to see a great sight. Briefly—if certain guarantees given me were to be fulfilled—I was about

to see the Apparition turned to reality—that is to say, stripped of its horror. Crossing the street bogs, I was in the mood which sees the Apparition—its visitations are altogether chanceful; unconfined, for certain, to verandahs—and all the way I was hoping against hope to see it, for once, as it were, in indubitable, unqualified certainty. I had been led to hope that I should see Heaven in substance and in truth. Seeing Heaven otherwise is a kind of hell; it is the apparition, and of that I had had much in three years.

I was set out for the Tokyo Academy of Music at Ueno, and the grief and tears of the day seemed a premonition of sorrow—a re-vision of the old hell. Yet, like a good Christian, I struggled manfully with the quagmires of the streets of Tokyo, and of the Ueno grounds, deriving some comfort from the alluring shadow and protective majesty of Ueno's cedars. These, I reflected, were some compensation should I not see the Apparition turned to beauty. I said to myself, as one should say to a disappointed searcher of treasure: 'At any rate that is a fine sky overhead.'

With a high but doubting heart I came to the Academy of Music. To be sure I heard it before I saw it. I heard a welter of piano notes, a huddle of them, chords in crowds, tumbling over each other like sheep passing through a strait gate in a panic. This came to my ears. To my eyes came a quite unlovely weather-board building, rain-dyed to mouse colour, of a single story above the ground floor, with uncommonly capacious window frames, and perhaps three times as long as high—say a frontage of a hundred or a hundred and twenty feet. Some of the windows were thrown up. The welter of piano chords had issued thence. There might be three or four pianos going in different rooms. These

sent me the flock of scales, that reached my ear an irregular army of discords, very terrible, sent out to scare me away. But I moved boldly on the Academy, still hopeful in spite of this manner of reception. I found an entrance-vestibule, concrete-floored, with walls of plaster, once white. Voices, calls, notes of instruments,—pianos, violins, cornets,—struggled half-dead through a closed door before me, and down through the ceiling, and along from passages to right and left, ending in more doors and stairs. Japanese lads, some in Japanese dress, others clad like myself, passed me in the vestibule, with 'Message' written on their faces; others trooped past in chattering bunches, moving doubtless to another classroom. I made my business known, and my authority, and soon came an instruction from Mr. J——, 'foreign' Principal of the Academy, to betake myself to the general hall. I betook myself accordingly—up a stair, through swinging doors. I was now in a theatre of some size—evidently a projection from the back of the building, for it was well lighted from the side walls. The seats rose in a tier to half the height of the rear wall. They looked upon a platform bearing an organ, a piano, and many music-stands. Already the Apparition—it had been hanging to my eyes all the dripping morning—lost some of its terror. I was in a small Albert Hall. What might not happen in an Albert Hall, even though small, even though here, twelve thousand miles from the Memorial? What angels might not float on wings of Music even here—angels to overwhelm the Apparition? My heart beat high with hope.

There was the sound of many feet and a crowd of Japanese young men and young women came out from the rooms behind the platform, and collected on it in

the talkative, haphazard, occasional manner of an assembling orchestra. They brought their instruments —my instruments, it seemed to me—not their horrible *samisen* and their bastard banjo, the execrable *koto ;* my instruments, the violins, the 'cellos, the cornets, flutes, and cymbals of my worship, the dishes of my feast. My heart beat higher, for there was a proper aspect of serious business in the whole affair. Even if the young women wore Japanese dress, and the majority of the young men, it was at once clear, from the mere manner of their handling my violins and cornets—preliminary to all motions towards playing them—it was clear that they were not charlatans or mountebanks, aping the arts of my race, playing with the holy fire of my gods, to palter and peddle with it. Clearly there was some proficiency and purpose in their act and demeanour.

Soon my friend came, with a brisk, pleasant, familiar, yet authoritative manner for the young men and young women, and a greeting for me perched high in the tier of seats, ready at the end of years of the recurring vision of hell to smother or to worship him. With fair promises—the guarantees I have spoken of—he had tempted me to come, and I was there with these promises in my heart; not now as a tolerant judge and well-wisher of Japan and the Japanese, but as one hungering for the reality of the vision, for the substance of that phantom of the West which had tortured my eyes not once or twice in a space of years. I was not there, it seemed, as a critic of the Japanese attempt in the music of Europe, but as one who had paid a price to be healed of an injured soul—injured by terrible deprivation—healed by Handel, Wagner, Mendelssohn, or other physician my friend might bring with him.

I was not strictly competent then, nor may be at any time, to estimate the value of Japan's progress in our music. I was in a false position for any nice appreciation. I demanded that my appetite should be satisfied by my friend; not that my palate should be asked to discriminate flavours and the nuances of musical sauces. 'Devil,' I said secretly, 'you tantalise me at your peril. After these years I am desperate.'

The orchestra quickly settled to place and order under the baton of my friend—the young women on his left, the young men on his right, he himself at the piano commanding it and them, Herr —— at the organ against the wall. I heard the violin strings tuned and watched the troublings and fidgetings of the orchestra as it prepared, my heart beating higher than ever. God! may you, if you love this thing they call music, which in truth is unnameable, may you never know yourself dying of the thirst of it!

I saw my friend's baton poised in the air. It fell. I was embarked. I was upon the sea. I found myself speeding with incredible rapidity to the nether side of the globe. The wretched phantom of the morning went like a gun-flash. The substance of Heaven took its place. The apparition became sensible reality. I was in Europe. I was 'Home.'

Mendelssohn's pianos, pianissimos, crescendos, fortes, fortissimos—the volume and stream of his dreams were 'all heaven before mine eyes,' and I forgot or cared not that the media of the vision were sisters of geisha, *musumès*, and their brothers, pagan clog-wearers. I had perhaps an hour of this heaven and woke I think but once, shaken, startled, when the voice of a Japanese youth sang 'O Rest in the Lord!' The articulation of

the English was clear; the voice a good baritone, perhaps of a somewhat nasal quality. It was the eccentricity of it that surprised and awoke me—'O Rest in the Lord!' by a son of twenty generations of pagans, in the heart of a land of dryad-worshippers! But the chief fact is that the apparition which comes to exiles was changed to heaven—otherwise to Reality—for me; that I was, for a time, healed. The world seemed to put on a new dress when I left the Tokyo Academy of Music; the bogs had disappeared from the streets of Tokyo. I forgot the comfort of the cryptomerias of Ueno. I was another man.

This is the record of a personal experience which I give as signification of the progress of the Revolution in Japanese Art. I give also Mr. J.'s facts. 'Yes,' said he, 'we do pretty well, but it has been hard work in my four years. The Academy draws upon the best musical talent in Japan, whatever of talent there is to draw upon. The preliminary of admission is that the student shall go through a piece of music at sight. This means that there is organised elementary musical instruction in the country. The Academy students range in age from fourteen to twenty or twenty-one. Having received a five years' training here, they go out into the country as teachers in the elementary schools. An organisation is thus growing which is a replica of the system of musical instruction in Europe. The voices I get among the boys average, I should say, much as in the same class in Europe. I should say the altos of the girls are the best of all my voices. All the students know some English, and our musical text is usually in that language. European airs are, however, adapted to Japanese text and *vice versa*. Songs or poems are composed for us, and their sentiment

being explained to me, I select a suitable score. As Christian ideas are not at all spread among the people, it is impossible to find Japanese texts precisely suitable for our requiem and sacred music. I sometimes, however, contrive to fit a heroic Japanese text to some of our religious and martial scores. The piano is the most popular of our instruments among the students. Organs are much used, however, for the "cheap organ" is now a Japanese manufacture.'

One leaves the Tokyo Academy of Music in a very wondering frame of mind. Critically examined, it has at the least trained a band of Japanese young men and young women to render the designated notes of our score on designated instruments of ours. If we must stop short of an affirmation that it has produced an orchestra, there is a passable certainty of its having taught this band of young men and young women to go through all the motions of an orchestra and to render a remarkable *vraisemblance* of its sounds. I affirm this much from my own experience, for I do not believe that I was cozened during my visit to the Academy on a wet day in September 1902. I am persuaded that the visit was not a dream.

There is no music indigenous to Japan, nor are there native musical instruments. This I affirm in the full knowledge that there is a Japanese scale of five notes, and that there are instruments named *samisen* and *koto*. I repeat, there is no music indigenous to Japan, nor are there musical instruments native to the country. Hence in this domain of Art, it is not a revolution that is in progress, but a creation. It is not proselytes that are made, but souls. Can they be made? Pending an answer from the Tokyo Academy of Music which might be final, I offer the remark to me of a lovable

but vinous virtuoso of Italy, who in a certain Japanese city has been striving for many years out of Japanese materials to make a brass band to serve the purposes of his fellow Europeans met for gaiety. Said he: 'Zey have not zee hârt.' Yet poor old R. has occasionally succeeded with his Japanese materials.

There is, it is said, a 'foreign school' of Japanese painting. One wishes it might be an unfounded rumour. Unfortunately you may see its work in Tokyo. A year or two since the Tokyo police draped all below the bust of one of its publicly exhibited nude studies. This was on behalf of public morals. Seeing others its studies, any of them, all of them, one feels that for the dearer sake of Art they should all be draped, and not only below the bust. Here the Revolution makes itself ridiculous, because I suppose it is supremely superfluous.



IN AKASHI STRAIT.

Eastern End of the Inland Sea.

## XXVII

## MIRABEAU AND ROUSSEAU

As a student of the Revolution I was bound to interview Marquis Ito. In France they might say of this man that he is the Revolution Incarnate. In truth he is its Mirabeau who, dying not in its infancy, has conducted it at the least to a healthy adolescence. He is no Danton, no Robespierre, no Napoleon. He is a Mirabeau of the epoch, who has not died untimely.

In Japan they say practically everything of Marquis Ito. Probably all adjectives between 'divine' and 'devilish' have been coupled with his name by his own countrymen, for this is part of the fate of men who incarnate revolutions. *Hito-tabi ashi agureba tenka ugoku* —'If he do but lift a foot, the whole world moves,' —is a tribute of his political followers, who are, as often as not, the nation. Two years ago his political lieutenant was assassinated. An able influential daily newspaper of Tokyo hinted, not at all darkly, that there was surely also a dagger about for the late lieutenant's chief. But the Revolution has not strangled its Mirabeau.

This man, a Samurai or knight of the Feudal Age of Japan, closed by Imperial Ordinance thirty odd years ago, committed a capital offence for the good of his country forty years since. The Feudal Age beheaded

men who left their native land and could be caught again. Marquis Ito risked it and worked a before-the-mast passage to London to absorb our civilisation and its methods. He returned to put his head to extraordinary uses. With it he conceived that enormous idea—the second phase of the Revolution—the abolition of the Feudal System. I have quoted his own narrative of that portentous conception. In his twenties he might scarcely be the exclusive nurse of the prodigious infant. But with the passing years his tutelage became more and more direct, more and more necessary. In the eighties he was father to the third great child of the Revolution—the Constitution, and, practically speaking, he has been sole tutor of this child—meaning that he has been preceptor and governor of the Revolution—since its birth. He has been four times official Prime Minister, and the rest of the years since the Constitution he has been chief of the Elder Statesmen, or unofficial Prime Minister. He is now sixty-three years of age.

Plainly, I must 'interview' Marquis Ito. So I made cautious inquiries and discreet overtures, feeling that men who incarnate Revolutions really belong to the heroic age which certainly would have spitted the modern interviewer on its knightly lance.

In the fact an interview with the Incarnate Revolution was easy. He—Ito—'would see me with pleasure at 10.30 to-morrow forenoon.'

At 10.30 I was seated in the narrow verandah of the Japanese hotel which entertained this Mirabeau of a Revolution during his day or two's sojourn in a provincial city. Mirabeau was 'stumping' the country, having lately organised a new party.

Outside the world was grey and dripping. In the garden below me the bamboo plumes drooped like the

tails of bedraggled fowls. The very gold of the golden carp in the toy lake was tarnished ; the leaden sky and the rain had turned it dirty vermilion. And the carp nosed about without zest. It was, in fact, the Japanese rainy season.

I was on the verandah of a considerable chamber—the guest-chamber of a first-class Japanese hotel. It was half open to the pallid world—two sections of the sliding wall being moved out of the way of my meeting with Mirabeau, for whom a chair, facing mine, waited on the verandah, emptily expectant, as it seemed. I waited, conscious of the oppressive vacuity of the guest-chamber and of the chair that faced me. This oppression was apprehension of the entrance of Mirabeau. A sliding-door squeaked. I started. It was a sallow, smiling youth, whose voice to the walls said, 'Marquis Ito will come ver' shortly,' and to me, 'The Revolution Incarnate will appear before you very shortly.' How differently the ears of walls hear ! The truth of it is, I was agitated.

Well, another sliding-door squeaked, and the panel-space left by its sliding was filled by a short, thick, blocky figure in the act of replacing a handkerchief in the tail pocket of its black cut-away morning coat. I rose as the figure came towards the verandah and the emptily expectant chair facing mine. 'Good morning, your Excellency,' I said, meaning, 'I hail thee, Mirabeau.' We shook hands, and the Man of the Japanese Revolution appeased the expectancy of the empty chair. I mean that Marquis Ito sat down. I did likewise and so faced the Revolution Incarnate which, I need not say, had returned my greeting cheerily enough, if huskily.

The face is incommunicably Oriental. I can never pretend to explore it, to fathom or chart its deeps, for I

am Occidental. I have no symbols, signs, or science to apply to this face. My theodolite and trigonometry will not suit to survey these mountains of the moon. The fact is, that the insignia of Oriental character are not our insignia. We see a big, wide-flanged nose, and we say, 'Here is some element of power.' We note a thick, drooping under lip and we conclude, 'Here is sensuality or irresolution.' In Japan, in China, in Asia, you may meet a big nose, and meeting it may encounter one of the varieties of power, but it is probably a coincidence. It is another cipher we need in Asia; the European code is no key to that cryptogram, the Oriental face.

The face is incommunicably Oriental. It is, that is to say, a mask—to us, to me, who possess no science of the Oriental face. The skin is old, very old, parchment, ruddied with the blood flowing behind it. It is strained taut, leaving only horizontal wrinkles across a brow that has no perpendicular, but bends like an arch from the eye-sockets. It is broad and very Japanese with its high, protruding cheek-bones, whence it falls away to an inconspicuous chin to which a few hairs, grey and an inch long, attach by way of a Napoleon. These hairs are matched by a scraggy few that curl over or about the upper lip. The full face contour is that of a kite with a rather long cross-piece and a rounded head.

The eyes are the only cipher I can hope to use upon this cryptogram. The iris is, of course, black-brown; there is no other Japanese iris, for the race has never been crossed. The white is no longer white; it is the yellow of yellow marble, reticulated with veiny streaks; the corners are, as it is said, blood-shot. I am not to interpret these signs. What I see for interpretation is

that the eye is both profound and unsteady. It may be impatience with me, a passing trifler engaging the Revolution Incarnate. The eye scarcely meets my questions; it shifts, rolls, sends me a single shaft of direct vision, and then squints upon the pallid sky without. It is the lips that answer me, not the eyes. In the West, the eyes of the man would chiefly make reply to me; here the lips are almost all the office of communication, and I do not know if the man's heart speaks. Yet, it is plain, the eyes are profound. There are immeasurable deeps in their intermittent shafts of direct vision. The Orient—Asia—is mostly incommunicative, wrapped in mystery. And when it bares its soul, it is like a vision of deep distorted sea-shapes disclosed at the convenient angle of a ship's roll as you peer over the side. The manner of Mirabeau supports this interpretation of his eye. It is shifting, restive, yet hesitating, non-committal, reserved.

This is really all I arrive at; the Revolution, as this man incarnates it, is profound and crafty. Or have, if you like, this string of epithets—subtle, able (the ability of experience upon a foundation of partially refined intellect), managing, suave, discreet, judging, wary, critical, disingenuous, self-regarding, self-respecting, self-knowing, wide-awake, inscrutable. Make a composite of the lot and you have Marquis Ito's eye, one window of the soul of the Revolution.

You may care to know the substance of what this Mirabeau said, though to me his eye was much more important. He spoke in English, but with many cogitative, interrupting, uncomfortable silences, so that I was fain to presume to 'help out' the Mirabeau before whom I had, in anticipation, trembled. 'It is true representative government in Japan is not yet what it is in

England, but we are moving in the right direction. Yes' [this with something of a smiling snicker] 'a good many of our politicians are after the boodle' [not Marquis Ito's idiom]. 'This is of necessity so. We need disinterested men as leaders. The Japanese Government will not deviate from an attitude of strict impartiality with regard to religions. I myself look to science, knowledge, culture, as a sufficient religion. We will continue to follow up the paths of European learning and inquiry. This means the continued abandonment of the canons and traditions of Chinese learning formerly followed. Our interest in China is strong. We look to Russia fulfilling her pledges with regard to Manchuria, no doubt upon some adequate agreement or arrangement safeguarding her interests. England seems as strong as ever. She might, with patience, have built up a better case for action in South Africa. In some respects she acted precipitately. I think in ten years the United States will probably be the formidable Power of the world.' And so forth, on concerns of more ephemeral interest.

I went away with a conspicuous remembrance of the eye of the Mirabeau of the Revolution—profound and crafty—undoubtedly a fine, if partial, symbolisation of the Revolution.

Marquis Ito, you may care to know, is chiefly famous in his own land for an art of falling upon his feet, though he stands and has for long stood upon the highest pinnacles of fame and office—a situation in which his art might seem to be difficult of practice.

. . . . . .

I am now in an English drawing-room. My foot treads a thick, muffling carpet. I seat myself in a chair of the suite, high-backed, with a seat of mottled

brocade. The table-cover, the carpet, the brocades, are one colour scheme, as required by canon. The total effect is a yellowish-brown. There is a bay-window in one wall, and an ordinary window in another, with brocade curtains. There is a cabinet, of cedar perhaps, against a third wall, and there are consoles and brackets and whatnots, presenting specimens of Japanese *faïence* and *objets d'art*. The master of the house is a collector and connoisseur. The drawing-room is certainly on the small side, but it is not too small for its contents. There is not the much that makes a litter, nor the little that leaves a void. There is light and luxury and art, ordered by taste.

I had come—again as a conscientious student of the Revolution—to 'interview' Count Okuma, named the Rousseau of the Revolution, at Waseda among cryptomeria groves on the skirts of Tokyo the capital,—Waseda with which the name of this Count Okuma is automatically coupled whenever it is mentioned in Japan.

Of this man it might be said that had there been no Marquis Ito, he might have been Marquis Ito. He does not incarnate the Revolution, yet of no other living man might it be said so truly that he 'incarnates' its spirit. There are men who are competent to guide, to direct, to manage great movements. There are other men who, in the little great empire of their own individualities, embody great movements—they are the movements, an epitome of them; they are part, a great part, of the force and soul of them, the force and soul which the other competent men direct. Of such is Count Okuma in the great movement which I call the Japanese Revolution. Beside that of Marquis Ito, his constructive work of the Revolution has been

as nothing; beside that of Marquis Ito, his native revolutionary 'soul' is as a blazing torch to a time-fuse. He has been Prime Minister, and for a generation he has been chief of a considerable party, but it is long since he was, so to speak, an official statesman of the Revolution. He cannot, it seems, manage the Revolution; he only inspires it. Had there been no Marquis Ito he might have managed it, with a little of Marquis Ito's success. As it is, he inspires it even to-day as Marquis Ito never did and never could inspire it. He fills an office which not Marquis Ito nor any other his contemporary could fill as he does. He is Unofficial Adviser of the Revolution. Its politics, its finance, its foreign relations; its trade and industry; its religion, its education; its art, its literature—he has no sphere but these. Public speech, public writing, private exhortation, party propaganda—he has no methods but these. You perceive that his sphere and his methods cover everything save official rule. This adviser is everywhere save in office; he does everything save advise officially. He has no prototype in England; nor, for the matter of that, has Marquis Ito. Equally is he a product of the Revolution with Marquis Ito; yet the functions of each are no more alike than the habits of a beaver and a bird. Revolutions produce both types.

Upon this man I waited in the English drawing-room of his Japanese-English villa, looking upon his English park at Waseda, Tokyo. He came in leaning upon a stick, for the Revolution, in the person of an obscure reactionary, inevitable vomit of an upheaval, threw a bomb at him fourteen or fifteen years ago, and with it shattered one of his legs. Even so he moved briskly, as if ease were not in his composition. 'I

wish,' I said, 'to ask Count Okuma questions about finance and commerce; politics, the Constitution, the people; about parties, about reaction, about education; religion, art, literature; and the future.' I may have smiled inwardly myself. The Count, as my recital came upon its end, laughed a huge laugh, but good-natured. Then he jerked his head, as if to say, 'All right, go on.'

He was in Japanese dress, black and grey, and rich. His face is an easier book than Marquis Ito's; so much easier that it now seems but a half-truth to say that the physiognomical insignia of the European character are not those of the Asiatic. The skin of this face is putty-yellow—not the putty-yellow of bad health, mind you. The profile, it seemed to me, was very like that of Egyptian mummy faces I had seen. The nose has the arch, and there is the swiftly retreating brow of a Rameses, with a mouth and chin relatively unimpressive. The cheek-bones are again somewhat prominent. The face is clean-shaven. There is a meagre showing of hair on the temples. By token of the nose, if nothing else, clearly a man of force. And then the eyes—their betrayal is unmistakable. They meet my questions, clear, expectant, ready, eager; they anticipate, they pounce upon, they seize my questions. This man wears his soul in his eyes, like other men; but, unlike others, his eyes refuse no challenge. The man's manner is part of his eyes; it is their harmonious setting. This Rousseau of the Revolution—whom, to its shame, it has maimed—as he takes the point of my question, bounds in his chair, to pour a flood of speech upon it. His crutch falls from his hand; the stricken limb is forgotten, and the man requires to readjust himself with care when he has done. His every answer is a spring, a leap; his every speech

a torrent. Oftenest he began to reply to me before I had stated the premises I allowed. It was the torrent that makes a revolution, without the circumspection, craft, and deliberation that has made Marquis Ito, and perhaps preserved the Revolution.

I think I discern in the eye, the gait, the speech of Count Okuma, who is sixty-four, that the Revolution was at one time an enthusiasm, like European Revolutions. That was quite a while ago, and Count Okuma lies since quite a while high and dry upon an unofficial lee shore. The Revolution was soon required to be profound and crafty, and it was Marquis Ito, not Count Okuma, who satisfied the requisition. But Count Okuma is by far the more refreshing. He inspires ; Marquis Ito 'manages.'

Rousseau boxed the compass of international politics. I think, when I introduced Japanese Finances, he recited to me, bewildered, the debt per head of population of the leading states of the world, or it may have been their earnings per adult male, or their savings per family. It may have been all three ; I am sure it could have been all three. On some Japanese problems he said, 'Our Constitution has the spirit of the Prussian Constitution, as well as that of the British. England is, of course, the mother of constitutional government, and that being so we had to take her in some degree as a model ; but the English idea is more or less mixed with the German in our Constitution. Our people, however, as yet are deficient in their idea of their rights and responsibilities in politics. Time will improve them in that respect, although it cannot accomplish everything. What we need mostly, greatly, is education. Only by education can our people acquire just ideas of their rights and responsibilities under the

Constitution. Thirty years ago we scarcely knew what education was. Our educational system, although it is not yet equal to that of the United States, Germany, or France, is yet far superior to that of Italy or Spain, or even Australia. Its results are manifest in our Army. Our success against China was due, of course, to the personal courage of our soldiers, but it was also, in part, due to the development of our educational system. If they had been as lacking in education as the Chinese mass, our troops would not have been half so successful as they were. When conscription was first adopted by us most of our soldiers were illiterate ; now many of the annual draft of conscripts are well educated, and almost all of them can read and write. And in the thirty years to come we hope to accomplish much more than we have done in the thirty years past, much as that has been. I do not look for the complete Europeanisation of our country in the future. We shall continue to develop a civilisation peculiar to ourselves, compounded of our own and that of Europe. As European civilisation is more and more introduced, our own will more and more develop with it and through it. It is in the present time that the two civilisations are being welded. The fusion is most remarkable in our Literature and Art. As the process goes on it will be seen that our Literature and Art are not to be totally annihilated, but that they will develop side by side with the increasing introduction of foreign literature and foreign Art.'

. . . . . .

The Rousseau and the Mirabeau of the Revolution make a fine pair. They are its soul and its mind, its spirit and intellect, heart and judgment, enthusiasm and craft.

## XXVIII

# WITH THE HIGH PRIESTS OF JAPANESE BUDDHISM

In the autumn of the year 1900 Japanese Buddhism did a unique thing. 1900 was the black, momentous year of Chinese destinies, the year of the siege of the Embassies of the civilised world in the Chinese capital. It is history now ; dark, bloody ; and its sombre gloom is scarcely relieved by the Christian conduct of the troops of the Allies in the campaign of rescue, nor mayhap in the penal operations following the Relief. A uniquely red or black year in China's history, it furnished the occasion of a unique act of Japanese Buddhism.

At the newspaper offices in Japan we were curiously surprised, one morning of the November of that purple year, when we tore the wrapper from a pamphlet, delivered with the diurnal shoal of 'exchanges,' and read upon its paper cover this title—

A CIRCULAR

in connection with

THE CHINESE EMERGENCY

(For all the ecclesiastics in the world).

The superscription made us curious, the contents and

subscription curiously surprised us. The first paragraph of the contents began: 'We, the Buddhists of Great Japan, beg to inform our revered ecclesiastical brethren in the world that the disturbances in China having now reached their climax, her national prestige is at stake,' etc., and it ended with this question: 'How is it possible for us [that is, 'We, the Buddhists of Great Japan,' and 'our revered ecclesiastical brethren in the world'], who have pledged ourselves to undertake the work of salvation, to remain silent with folded hands?' —all in clear, excellent English. The subscription, at the end of thirteen octavo pages, was—

Representatives of the Great Japan Buddhists' Union, at their Headquarters within the Kenninji Temple in Kyoto, Empire of Great Japan.

Genkō Nakayama,
Superintendent of the Tendai Sect.

Iŭkyo Chō,
Superintendent of the Shingon Sect.

Kodo Hisata,
Superintendent of the Hieizan branch of the Jodo Sect.

Dokutan Toyoda,
Superintendent of the Nanzenji branch of the Rinzai Sect.

Kōei Ōtani,
Superintendent of the Otani branch of the Shin Sect.

Korin Yoshi,
Superintendent of the Obaku Sect

We were first curious, then curiously surprised. In this frame of mind we wrote our 'leaders,' in effect pointing out the unique thing Japanese Buddhism had done. Japanese Buddhism was claiming, or seeking a place, or, by warrant of this, its 'Circular . . . for all the ecclesiastics in the world,' was making a move to capture a place among the world-forces of the time. You might view the Circular so, or you might laugh at it and lay it aside. Strangely, the same alternative

offers with regard to other phenomena of the New Era in Japan: you feel in a kind of quandary whether to hail an Epochal Fact or to laugh at a quixotic antic. It was somewhat so as to the 'Circular . . . for all the ecclesiastics in the world.' In our leaders we made a compromise of it; we said the Circular might be worth the attention of Christendom as a sign; we paid a sincere compliment to the excellence of the Japanese writers' facility in the English language.

It is of interest to note that a formal salutatory response to the Circular was made by a council of the Presbyterian Churches of the United States of America. Rome, I think, passed it by. Convocation, I fear, did not mention it. It is now, I suppose, forgotten by 'all the ecclesiastics in the world,' to whom it was historically—or quixotically—addressed. For my part, I went to Kyoto to 'interview' its authors, to interview Japanese Buddhism, to meet its Highest Priests, to question them of their Interest, their Authority, their Miracles. With a meek purpose of seeking light, I constituted myself Ambassador-Extraordinary from Christendom to the powers of this Japanese Buddhism which invited Christendom to join hands with it for the 'salvation'—the spiritual salvation, mark you—of China, perishing.

Now, when you go to Japan you will not fail to visit Kyoto. In fact, you will not have visited Japan if you shall not have visited Kyoto. True, of other places I might say somewhat the same—of Nikko, of Shoji, of Nara. Still, of Kyoto let me specially say it—in italics as it were—you will not have seen, you will not have visited Japan, if you shall not have seen, have visited, Kyoto. And, ah me! when you have seen it, memories of it will haunt you to your grave, not as

forbidding spectres, but as after-visions of joy. It is a fine thing to put memories in the bank for the comfort of declining years. As for me, I have selected the site of the abode of my age on the slopes of Hieizan, the mountain that looks on this, my Marathon.

Tokyo is the capital of Japan to-day; Kyoto was the capital yesterday, a yesterday of eleven hundred years. Of Tokyo to-day you might say that it is infatuated with its modernity; of Kyoto, that it is in love with its ancientness. In Tokyo there is Japan's Present—eager, energetic, incongruous. In Kyoto there is Japan's Past—placid, picturesque, inconsequent. In Tokyo the temples—that is to say, Old Japan—are the side-shows; in Kyoto they are the city. In Toko they persist. They are the life of Kyoto. Kyoto is Old Japan, with growing echoes of the New. Tokyo is New Japan, with dying echoes of the Old. But Kyoto does not yet muse all the day, as Tokyo does not yet all the day make syllogisms. Kyoto is not yet mere reminiscence, not yet the Old Japan which merely contemplates; as Tokyo is not yet the New Japan which merely reasons. Both are yet alive and vigorous, but each in its own way and to its own ends. In Kyoto there is yet the colour and the spirit of the old life; in Tokyo there is the spirit and the colour of the new. Kyoto was the Japanese capital yesterday; it is still the capital of Japan's yesterday, that glorious, many-tinted, irrelevant, iridescent Yesterday when the Japanese Samurai beheld his soul in the sheen of a dirk, and, the while he toyed with a fair lady, looked for the why of things in the how.

Yet there is a long spacious railway station at

Kyoto, with crowds of porters in scuffy blue army cloth and peaked caps. There are hotel boots in red caps—whence *akaboshi*, meaning the 'red hats'; there are book-stalls and refreshment bars; a left-luggage office and bawling sweetmeat boys. In short, there is a horrible modern railway station at Kyoto, because Kyoto is on the main trunk line laid along the sinuous body of Japan like the vermicular vertebræ of a snake. But Kyoto, as it were, can't help the modern railway station, confound it; so she ignores it, or tries to. In point of fact, the railway station lies just outside the limits of the city proper, as if Kyoto could tolerate it only as an extramural nuisance imposed upon her by New Japan and its madness. Kyoto tolerates the railway station, but at a distance, and never, by all her temple gods, never nearer her heart than the hem of her garment. She allows the New Era only the importance of an echo—an echo of its railway station.

You rattle away from Kyoto's railway station on your jinrikisha into another Age, another Era—Japan's Yesterday, of which, as I say, Kyoto is the capital.

We arrived in the evening, as a cold December dusk was closing down upon the city, upon Japan's Yesterday. Kyoto's encircling mountains loomed low and distant, black-green, a dark toothed horizon-belt, wherever we looked beyond the city.

'Hibiya!' ejaculated my jinrikisha-man—as if scarcely to me—and he whisked a sweat rag over his brow and cheeks, ruddy and wet. The hotel mistress was already curtseying, and my Japanese chaperone returned her greetings, which were chiefly smiles, as is the manner of your Old Japanese hostess. The hostess looked at me and smiled. Then another word with

my chaperone and a laugh; then a bow to me and a smile; then a smiling exclamation to a plump kitchen-table-housemaid at her elbow; then back to the beginning with a remark to my chaperone, and through the formulary again to another exclamation (with smile) to the plump kitchen-table-housemaid, whose face bore a deep-printed, as it were, indelible smile. 'A foreigner come to stay the night at my hotel. Such an honour! To overlook my shameful unworthiness, and the disgraceful appearance and situation of the house!'—and she smiled and curtsied. The Japanese landlady recommends her house to you by stigmatising it as a piggery. She approves herself by allusions to her friends the pigs. And, strangely, it is all deeply genuine here in Kyoto, capital of Japan's Yesterday, where the heart of the old, kindly, gentle, considerate, tactful, gracious, complimentary, illogical, happy Japan beats warm and strong. I would not say as much of Yokohama, scarcely even of Tokyo. The deeper you penetrate into barbarian Japan the sweeter the manners, the finer the graces you encounter. Only barbarian Japan does not reason. The social system there is built upon another theory of life than ours—than that of New Japan. Barbarian Japan laughs for life.

Well, well, I had come to Kyoto not to moralise upon Japan's regretful, unregretted past, but to interview its modern Buddhism upon its 'Circular to all the ecclesiastics of the world.'

Before we set out, K——, my chaperone, and I had some thimblefuls of tea, with *castira* cake for me. The plump maid knelt beside us, nominally to see that we lacked for nothing, really to give her indelible smile expression in many giggles. The ice being broken, I

said it was a cold night. She laughed. I said Kyoto was a pretty town. She laughed loud. I remarked that the tea was warm. Her sides shook. You see, as I have hinted, there is no logic in the laugh of Old Japan. It is part of its theory of life to laugh—at least to smile—when you shall remark that hair grows upon the head, or that dogs have four legs. So the plump maid laughed when I said the weather was cold. Very literally, Old Japan dies laughing. As literally it lives laughing.

The moon was risen as we crossed the wide courts of the Higashi-Hongwangi, temple of temples in Kyoto, because, completed in 1895, it is of this Japanese Age of Revolution, and because it would be a marvel of any Japanese age. Its huge roof cast a black pyramidal shadow on the moonlit court. The shadow was deep, and the silence deeper. Not a spangle of human light blinked anywhere in the mass of the temple, high or low, and the black court-enclosing walls, with their Japanese eave-copings, menaced me, like grim bastion-curtains, on every side. The exhilaration of adventure thrilled me. And truly, as I found, I was about to cross swords with the High Priests of Eastern thought and ritual; but they were dialectic swords.

The voice of my chaperone rang loud on the face of the silence, like a footfall on the flags of a silent railway station, when he exchanged greetings with the cicerone of the temple at a door within the black shadow. 'Yes, the honourable foreigner was expected, and all things were ready.' We removed our shoes and followed the old man, carrying a sputtering candle, along narrow verandah-corridors and through matted chambers to one wherein was a baize-covered table and four chairs, concessions to me, Ambassador-Extraordinary from

Christendom to Japanese Buddhism, self-constituted, yet I hope sincere.

Here were two young men, my expected High Priests. I might have looked to meet Aarons. Two acolytes, as it seemed, fronted me. But they were indeed the plenipotentiaries delegated by Japanese Buddhism to answer to me of the authority and miracles of the Faith which, a week or two before, had addressed the Christian world in a Circular admonishing it to truer sacrifice and a purer conscience in the religious assault upon China. They were young, scarcely thirty, with faces of Oriental or Japanese intelligence, which is not ours. One was eager and interested. The other was chiefly a suppressed guffaw, which broke its frail bonds a score of times before we had done. They were joint authors of the 'Circular,' at the direction of the highest priests of Japanese Buddhism.

In the fit gloom of the chamber, whose flickering candlelight, shed from the baize-covered table, threw bobbing, elusive shadows of our heads and shoulders high up among the cornice beams, we discussed together questions of life and death; but often the suppressed guffaw made a burlesque of it. When you ask a priest if he be willing to give his life for his truth, it is a queer thing if he say 'Yes' with a giggle. They smoked their little Japanese pipes. This might not be improper. But a giggle with the speech of a potential martyr is a living paradox. I ought, I suppose, to have remembered that I was in Japan, and in the Old Japan at that.

'We were first prompted to write the Circular,' they said, 'by religious motives. Our statesmen are promoting the position and prestige of Japan politically, so that now she is one of the leading Powers, and in fact the leading Power in the East. It seemed to us

that we should make an effort to bring Japan to the front in religious enterprise. We hear that Christianity is labouring all over the world for the good of society, and with shame of our past neglect to take our part in the work, we now desire to co-operate with Christianity. Yes, we have studied Christian ethics, but we remain satisfied with our own. Buddhist doctrine greatly resembles the ideas of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and, to our thinking, Christianity and Buddhism might be brought to work in harmony. The whole world might be brought under the influence of an alliance between Buddhism and Christianity.'

We came rapidly upon points of dogma or quasi-dogma. Buddha and Buddhism had their Universal Benevolence, even as Christ and Christianity had their 'Do unto others as you would be done by.' Buddha died to the world, even as Christ. He who might have been Emperor or King (so said they) drank from the deep well of the world's sorrow. For Buddha's Universal Benevolence his priests had died even as Christian martyrs, and they who spoke to me of these things were willing to do likewise. Then, or a little before, or a little later, one of the pair failed to contain himself. Of course he had manners enough to laugh to the wall, but it was very strange.

Then to some of the charges of the 'Circular,' as the allegation that Christian missionaries in China mingled their ostensible aims with political machinations. 'Well,' said they, 'we do not suspect Christian missionary bodies of political plots, but there is some evidence to show that the missionaries themselves are prone to suborn the influence of Ministers and Consuls to the purposes of their propaganda. We ["the Buddhists of Great Japan"] have no intention of

trenching upon politics. We desire only to propagate Buddhistic doctrine in China, and thereby attempt, with the agents of Christianity, to uplift China and the world. We have no design or purpose of supporting the Japanese Government in any of its political enterprises in China or elsewhere, though we may follow it with our work of disseminating the saving truths of Buddhism.

'Oh no, (they replied to pointed questions of mine), we do not profess that our work in Japan is complete. We have much to do here, and in these times we hope to bring our teaching more into line with the science and thought of Europe, now so abundantly prevailing in Japan. Yet we hold that Buddha's Universal Benevolence is an active living influence in the lives of our fellow-countrymen. The power of Buddhism is strong and widespread in Japan. You cannot pass hostile judgment upon it by instancing the status of women in the country, or by calling in evidence the corrupt lives of some of its priests. The one fact appertains to our social custom and tradition, and the weakness of particular priests is not a condemnation of the gospel of their faith.

'We have nothing but good-will for the Christian missionaries in Japan. There is absolute religious toleration here, and we desire nothing else. We wish to work with them in harmony, for ends which we believe to be in the end identical with theirs.'

Yet always, or frequently, there was the suppressed guffaw of one of the pair to bring me back half unconsciously to the mood of dilemma in which the 'Circular' put us when it came to our hands,—Epochal Fact, or Quixotic Antic?

I leave it so. The conscience and heart of Buddhism is to me, to us, the unfathomed deep of a strange sea.

I have given its Japanese voice and profession to me in these times of Japanese Revolution. What can I do more? What but wait for the morrow with the rest of the world?

In the morning I returned to my high priests of Japanese Buddhism, now old friends, as it seemed. They showed me their temple, marvel, as I have said, of this Japanese age. 'The rebuilding of this grand temple was a strictly popular enterprise,' says the guide-book. 'All the surrounding provinces contributed their quota, over a million yen (£100,000) in all, while many peasants, considering gifts in kind to be more honourable, and, as it were, more personal than gifts in money, presented timber or other materials. The timbers were all lifted into place by twenty-nine gigantic hawsers made of human hair.'

They showed me the hawsers. I wonder if I may swear, having seen them, that my high priests were right to say that Buddhism is, by evidence of the hawsers, a power in the hearts of the Japanese; or should I make a jest of it, and say that it hath assuredly a powerful effect upon their heads. I might at least plead, in extenuation, that one of the priest-authors of the famous 'Circular . . . for all the ecclesiastics of the world' made a jest of some of my most poignant questions to him thereanent.



A SHRINE UPON A HILL.

## XXIX

## CREEDS VIEWED OBJECTIVELY

Revolutions unsettle men's minds and excuse a plethora of philosophies and their eccentricity. By this token the Japanese upheaval challenges a leading place among revolutions. It achieves somewhat more than honourable distinction. It demands, I imagine, that it be at the least bracketed first.

In a leading Japanese magazine-review of October 1902 I read an article, 'Japan's Progress and her Mission in the World' (in English and Japanese), a paragraph of which says: 'By way of finding out what a strong assimilative power is possessed by the Japanese, we call the reader's attention to a rather dry list of philosophers and their systems which in one form or other have followers in Japan:—The Ionian, the Italian, the Eleatic Schools; the Atomists, the Sophists; Socrates, Plato, Aristotle; the Stoics, the Epicureans, the Sceptics, Neo-Platonists, Gnostics, Schoolmen; Descartes, Malebranche, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Helvetius, Kant, Fichte, Shelling, Schopenhauer, Herbert, Hegel, Hartmann, Diehring, Lange, Comte, Mill, Spencer.' Moreover, it is ingenuously added: 'Not being entirely satisfied with these systems, there are numbers of Japanese speculative thinkers who, retiring from active society, are spending

their time and energy in producing new forms of philosophy.'

Japan—the Revolution—having proved all that Europe has to give in philosophies, is intent on formulating one of her own; nay, more than one: she spends 'time and energy in producing new forms of philosophy.' Inquire a little further and you find that Japan to herself proposes a more extraordinary thing; she proposes to Orientalise Christianity. 'Every man his own philosopher' is at length permissible among us; 'Every man his own Christ' is a long, long way ahead of us. Yet it is the same thing when you grasp the Japanese point of view—I mean the point of view of the men who direct the Revolution.

Incidentally what a promise, at any rate what an entertainment, is here! 'Not being entirely satisfied with these systems;' discontented, that is, with the thought and speculation of all the ages and all their sages, from Plato to Spencer, the Japanese Revolution spends time and energy in producing new forms of philosophy.' Let us incidentally admire this fine courage; the East, mayhap, hath not yet ceased to send us wonders. Who knows but that this is the People that will show us the new order of life, the People of the true fundamental originality, the children of undiscovered precocities, of unsuspected and undreamt shapes of thought and opinion, lying deep in the womb of the human spirit-mind?

You wish to understand the religious, or ethico-religious, mind and attitude of the New Japan? Well, it is not difficult, though I profess to speak only my isolated and individual opinion.

Recall the working theory of the Revolution—the law of arithmetical progression, from externals, or, if

you like, from trousers, inwards, to the fountain of dreams, or, if you like, the imponderable soul of man. By inference of this law, the Revolution must have accomplished nothing, or next to nothing, of change in the soul of Japan, and the evidential facts support the hypothesis of my adventurous theory. In the republic of the soul—assuming such—of forty of the forty-five millions—upon a moderate estimate—the old gods, Buddhistic, Shintoistic, rule with a scarcely diminished authority. In the soul of four and a half millions of the remaining five there is perhaps a compromise—a compromise between the ancient gods and the doubts imported by the Revolution along with science and parliamentary institutions. In the soul of two hundred thousand of the ultimate half-million it is a compromise 'twixt all gods and a stoic or perplexed indifference. Label one hundred and fifty thousand professed Christians, and the final remnant parcel into one hundred thousand who deceive themselves if they think they believe anything, and fifty thousand who worship Reason and amuse themselves on occasion with 'the production of new philosophies.' Do this and the tale is complete; you have analysed and classified the worships, faiths, beliefs, doubts, scepticisms of the Japan of the Revolution.

Yet it is certain that but a few years ago Christianity rose upon a tide of high favour to the highest Japanese circles, so that there was some talk and even some expectation of its formal enacted adoption as the State religion. All speculations as to the religious future of Japan—as to the whole future of the Revolution indeed—are conditioned by this fact, and the idiosyncrasy which it signifies, an idiosyncrasy which is both native and acquired, born, that is, of the Revolution. This

idiosyncrasy strangely means that the soul of Japan is apt to be carried away by its eyes ; that the depths of its spiritual seas are liable to be phenomenally visited by the froth and foam of their surface ; that the rocks of its being may be undermined by its tears. In a word, it is not easy to say where is the soul of Japan, or what things are its peculiar, permanent concern. Japan asks : Why should religion be the soul of man, or theologies its one peculiar and permanent concern? 'My soul,' Japan says, 'may be my Art, and why should not theologies be merely my entertainment, the amusement of my idle hours?' And who will answer fitly? You are, in fact, again come upon the Japan which is to us inexplicable.

So, while it is not difficult to understand the religious, or ethico-religious mind of the New Japan, it is yet, in a superior or inferior sense, impossible. The fifty thousand who, of the forty-five millions, worship Reason, and peradventure spin philosophies, make it easy ; the unknown Japanese soul makes it impossible. The fifty thousand are the Revolution ; they direct and mould it. They and the Japanese nation are the Japanese soul, which is unknown ; which, I doubt, knows not itself.

You have to understand, then, that Japan's Revolution, in so far as it is a triumph, is a triumph of Reason, naked, sharp, and cold, as the blade of a sword. This at once explains the attitude and mind of its leaders, dead and alive, towards creeds and religions. That attitude and that mind are expressed by Marquis Ito's 'Science, knowledge, culture—education—are my religion for Japan.' Marquis Ito is the pre-eminent man of the Revolution.

Remark that this attitude does not exclude or preclude

an admission of the utility or even the necessity of a faith or of faiths. The highest testimony witnesses that priesthoods are indispensable to the frame of states that would be great. The Japanese leaders admit so much, with an implication that it must be admitted because humanity is frail and the human mind as yet afraid of its own unaided interpretations of the great enigmas. The greatest teacher and trainer of the mind of the New Japan, Fukuzawa Yukichi, dead but two years ago, whose withering clearness of intellect and impregnable serenity of spirit placed him among the great of the Age, defined his own position and that of the Revolution in an aphorism and his defence of it. 'Religion is like tea,' he said, 'and its purveyors are like tea-merchants. You choose the tea whose flavour you like best, and you buy from the tea-merchant who sells it.' His reply to criticism of the aphorism, chiefly from foreign Christian religionists, was: 'You suppose that I make an attack upon religion itself. Nothing was further from my intention. I have said plainly that I am not a believer in any religion, yet in spite of this, I have for many years emphasised the importance of propagating religion among my countrymen, recognising as I do that it is one of the things men need in order to get through life.' So he frequently exhorted his compatriot Buddhist priests to purge their unclean lives and preach truth, which to the people was saving, though to him a lie.

Take again a fuller display of Marquis Ito's view and intent. Five years ago was mooted a reorganisation of the national education on a religious basis. Here is a Japanese interviewer's report of Marquis Ito's observations: 'He did not hesitate to dismiss the rumour as a baseless fabrication. That religious votaries should endeavour to push their evangelical efforts in every

direction, educational or political, was intelligible enough. But it would be the height of folly for educationists to invoke the aid of religion. . . . The modern progress of Japan was, in his opinion, due among other things to the fact that all religious entanglements had been wisely avoided in the domains of education and politics. "Look," said he, "look at those Oriental countries which are still in a state of religious bondage. Do we not observe in those countries that religious prejudice still constitutes a fatal barrier to the introduction of an intelligent system of administration? Do those among us who would have religion introduced into the field of education desire to follow in the footsteps of the backward countries of the East?" He did not mean to say that religion should be banished altogether from society; the people were perfectly free to believe and profess any form of religion, only— . . .' with re-affirmation of the drastic and sufficing efficiency of Education, pure and undefiled.

'In the view of the ruling classes, religion is a secondary affair. The important thing is to conserve the national morality, which inculcates love of country, loyalty to the Sovereign, filial piety, family harmony, respect for parents, goodwill among sons and daughters, the worship of ancestors, etc. These are civic and family observances, not religious. This moral system limits its aims to this world, and its practice contemplates no celestial reward.'[1]

The religion of the Revolution is not then a Religion, but a civic and family morality, with an admission of the uses, probably good, of explicit creeds and fleshly priesthoods among the unlearned. As the writer I have

[1] *Le Japon: Essai sur les Mœurs et les Institutions* (1901). By I. Hitomi, a Japanese.

just quoted adds : 'They [the Revolution] nevertheless recognise the need of supernatural faiths among the people ; but, for themselves, they are content to follow Reason and Conscience.' The fifty thousand who are the Revolution and the New Japan worship Reason, spin philosophies for intellectual exercise or the advancement of learning, and view all religions objectively, without passion, bias, or interest. In your estimate of the religious attitude of the Japan of to-day they and their mind must be held pre-eminently important. It is chiefly they who, recognising the utilities of creeds and priesthoods in progressive polities, would, with a fine daring, Orientalise Christianity ; or, mayhap, with equal originality, Europeanise the native Buddhistic Shintoism. What if they have stumbled upon a new deep truth—that Religion is Race,—that ethnology holds the key to the propagation of faiths? Who knows? Agnostic with a great calm and a final satisfaction, the Revolution thus agitates itself upon a question of 'the religion for Japan.' 'Creeds are foolishness,' it says ; 'but the people love and need follies ; so let us prescribe for them a foolishness.' It is like the Revolution to treat, almost as if it were a jest, that sublime preoccupation which to us, their exemplars, expresses all the height and all the depth of Life.

'I have but ten minutes to catch my train for Southampton,' said a Japanese, leaving England in a hurry to become Minister of Education in his own country, to Max Müller years ago in Oxford,—'I have but ten minutes to catch my train. We want a new religion for the people in Japan. What religion shall we adopt?' This is the Revolution's question, with ten minutes to catch its train of affairs of real importance. Its own

reply is sometimes a Japanese Christianity, sometimes an improved Buddhism, sometimes a brand-new creed from somewhere.

And, note you, even Japan's professed Christians intend and schematise a Japanese or Oriental Christianity. One, Mr. Shimada Saburo, editor of a great Tokyo daily, who discussed the gravest affairs with me, with our heads at a few inches from the ink-rollers of his newspaper's Hoe machine—no other where was there peace for talk in the republic of noise, dirt, and disorder, that is called a newspaper office in Japan—this Mr. Shimada Saburo, a professed Christian and—greater rarity—a politician of purity and eminence, writes: 'The Christianity that gains the hearts and minds of the people of Japan will be our own, a Japanese Christianity. It will not be exactly like that of England, or of the United States. Just as we have united the Benevolence of Confucius and the Mercy of Buddha, and have made a product peculiar to Japan, so Christianity will be tinged with the national characteristics.' Says a Japanese newspaper: 'Christianity has been Anglicised and English intellectual qualities have not by one iota been affected thereby. In the same way, Christianity, of whatsoever description, will first have to become "Japanised" before Japan can be Christianised.' And another journal conveniently enumerates the following five 'essential qualifications' for Japan's future religion:—(1) It should be scientific; (2) it should be ethical; (3) it should be cosmopolitan; (4) it should be philosophical; (5) it should be corrective.

The truth is quite apparent. The Revolution, and even some influential Japanese Christianity, viewing Christianity and all religions, takes, as by instinct, the

objective attitude and mind. And all the time the earnest Christian missionary is subjective. 'Make no doubt,' says he or she, 'Japan will be won, must be won, for Christianity.' On one side there is the intellectual and 'racial' view of religion, on the other there is religion viewed by faith, by itself, by the *a priori* judgments of that psychic phenomenon, absolute belief. I do not declare for one point of view or the other; I am hopeful only of making faithful report of the facts.

And pending the decision of the objective, highly philosophical debate of the Revolution dilettantes, upon the Religion for the People, the forty millions contentedly, laughingly pray to the innumerable calendar of their Buddhistic-Shintoistic hero-gods and goblins. A competent Japanese writer, inquiring if the religious beliefs of the people of Japan have changed, whether the old superstitions still hold the fort of the popular mind in the new era, finds that there is little change. 'Among the ignorant,' says he, 'such Buddhist divinities as Mida (Amida), Kwannon, Yakushi, and Dainichi, are habitually worshipped. . . . Those who wish to be rich serve Daikokuten, Benten, Bishamon, Ebisu, or Uga-no-kami. Those who fear the work of the devil serve Fudo. Those who desire lovers pray to Kangiten and Aizen. Those who wish for fame serve Dai-itoku; those who wish to bring up children and grandchildren aright, Kishibojin; those who fear fires, Atago, or the god of Mount Akiha; those who fear the fires of hell, Jizo and Emma. . . . Prayer is all of a kind, either against misfortune or for happiness.' These old gods are worshipped—I mean deprecated—in a hundred thousand temples, and at unnumbered little shrines by wayside and mountain

path, little shrines upon whose enticing picturesqueness all the world has long been wholly agreed.

Withal, mark that the Revolution has somewhat aroused Japanese Buddhism from its ancient torpor, and thereby, as much as by its own proud attachment to Reason, has placed against the destiny of subjective Christianity in Japan a very large point of interrogation, of which, of course, subjective Christianity is unconscious.

And, in the end, it is perhaps a question whether the atmosphere, the proper element, the true food and sustenance, of the soul of Japan be religion and the supernatural—our religion and our supernatural.

## XXX

## THE PSYCHIC LINK?

JAPANESE statesmen-philosophes—the potters at the wheel of the Revolution—do their day's work—their era's work—under the sole foremanship of Reason, and in the evening they play at stitching a crazy-work creed for the People, who gape for altar-cloths. Meanwhile the nation, statesmen, philosophes, people, worship the Imperial ancestors and their own. Here the Western mind pauses, or moving forward, is lost in the shadowed windings of an Oriental labyrinth. Let me quote—that is to say, let the Japanese mind lead us, blind, to the heart of this labyrinth, and leave us there dumbfounded :—

'There are two sacred places in every Japanese house :[1] the *Kamidana*, or "god-shelf," and the *Butsudan*, or "Buddhist Altar." The first-named is the Shinto altar, which is a plain wooden shelf. In the centre of this sacred shelf is placed a Taima, or O-nusa (great offering), which is a part of the offerings made to the Daijingu of Isé, the temple dedicated to Amaterasu Omi-Kami, the *First Imperial Ancestor*. The Taima is distributed from the Temple of Isé to every house in the Empire at the end of each year,

[1] From *Ancestor-Worship and Japanese Law*, by Nobushige Hozumi, Professor of Law in the Imperial University of Tokyo ; also of the Middle Temple. Italics, capitals, etc., are given as in the original, which is in English.

and is worshipped by every loyal Japanese as the representation of the First Imperial Ancestor. On this altar the offering of rice, saké (liquor brewed from rice) and branches of sakaki-tree (cleyera japonica) are usually placed, and every morning the members of the household make reverential obeisance before it by clapping hands and bowing; while in the evening lights are also placed on the shelf. On this shelf is placed, in addition, the charm of Ujigami, or the *local tutelary god* of the family, and in many houses the charms of the other Shinto deities also.

'In a Shinto household there is a second god-shelf, or Kamidana, which is dedicated exclusively to the worship of *the ancestors of the house*. On this second shelf are placed cenotaphs bearing the names of the ancestors, their ages, and the dates of their death. These memorial tablets are called "Mitama-shiro," which means "representatives of souls," and they are usually placed in small boxes shaped like Shinto shrines. Offerings of rice, saké, fish, sakaki-tree, and lamps are made on this second shelf as on the first.

'In the Buddhist household there is, in addition to the Kamidana, a Butsudan on which are placed cenotaphs bearing on the front posthumous Buddhist names, and on the back the names used by the ancestors during their life-time. The cenotaph is usually lacquered and is sometimes placed in a box called "Zushi," while family crests are very often painted both on the tablet and on the box. Offerings of flowers, branches of shikimi-tree (*Illicium religiosum*), tea, rice, and other vegetable foods are usually placed before the cenotaphs, while incense is continually burnt, and in the evening small lamps are lighted. The Butsudan takes the place of the second god-shelf of

the Shinto household, both being dedicated to the worship of family ancestors.

'From the foregoing brief description of the sacred altars of a Japanese household, it will be seen that there are *three kinds of Ancestor-Worship* in vogue—namely, the worship of the First Imperial Ancestor by the people, the worship of the patron god of the locality, which is the remains of the worship of clan ancestors by clansmen, and the worship of the family ancestors by the members of the household.'

Says this writer, moreover: 'Neither the introduction of Chinese civilisation, the spread of Buddhism, nor the influence of European civilisation have done anything to shake the firm-rooted custom [Ancestor-Worship] of the people.' So here at last, it might seem, is the indubitable soul of Japan, unshaken, immutable! Here, it seems, may be the limit of the Revolution's law of arithmetical progression; the point at which the advance of the Revolution is checked by an impregnable fortress, the heart and fount of Japanese origins, the unexorcised spirit of the race.

For one of the large questions of the Revolution arises here, fascinating, exciting, momentous, when you have learned to wade among the profundities of an amazing convulsion. What is to be the bridge betwixt the two Civilisations? What link is to preserve the continuity of the psychic record of the race and the land? Where is the immutable—the necessary, saving immutable—of the old civilisation, the immutable which is and shall be at once the lever, the pivot, and the fulcrum of the vast efforts and enterprises of the New Era? To question the necessity of this bridge, this link, this immutable, is to ignore palpable phenomena of history. Japan herself is wiser than

this ignorance. She knows and admits that she cannot here refute History, even if she would. She admits the need of premises to the argument; she recognises a law of evolution. She does not profess to prove spontaneous generation; she is conscious of the impossibilities of an idealist view of ideas. In other words, she admits Law, which presupposes conditions. Of conditions she admits, nay demonstrates, that they may be changed, or permeated with a new principle. The antecedent 'accident' of their existence she does not deny. She does not delude herself with a notion that conditions have an existence apart from their essence, their body; or that, hence, their essence is merely a name. In a word, Japan does not profess to be re-creating herself. She professes only to have changed, or to be changing the order of her days. It is a Revolution, not a Re-birth.

So then the bridge, the link, is not only necessary. It is even of the nature of the case.

It is, it seems, in Ancestor-Worship, guised under many names, that Japan recognises or feels a possible or a certain bridge. Here is the antecedent essence of conditions with which she not only feels it necessary not to interfere, but which she feels it beyond her power either to question or to annul, under penalty, upon either attempt, of race-suicide, that is to say, of irretrievable disaster. Human nature is the antecedent essence of human history, is it not? Similarly, there is racial character, race nature, if you like, which is equally the essence antecedent to national or race history. When national history, in a few millennia, shall merge in world-history, the latter will be merely a composite of all the assortments of the former. It will be none of them, but all of them.

Other names for Ancestor-Worship in Japan are, loyalty, filial piety, the national religion, the national soul, Shintoism. That is to say, Japan herself scarcely knows what it is, save perhaps that it is her life, her heart. Perhaps she here only raises in another form, in another aspect, our large deep question,—The nature of the soul? At any rate she has, I say, all sorts of names for it, and many definitions, which for us make of it, whatever it be, an Oriental, the Japanese, labyrinth, the mystical nodus of an Event which, in itself, is to us an Enigma. How might I, how might we, divine the nature of that which Japan herself is unable to define save in a confusion of definitions?

The writer, whose account I have just quoted, makes the Japanese Constitution at heart Ancestor-Worship, or Ancestor-Worship at heart the Japanese Constitution! Says he: 'The foregoing statement of the facts relating to the Constitution of the Empire' [a recitation of the Articles declaring the Emperor's prerogatives] 'will be sufficient to show that the sovereignty of Japan is the heritage of Imperial Ancestors, and that the foundation of the Constitution is Ancestor-Worship.' There you are,—Ancestor-Worship is the Japanese Constitution: the Japanese Constitution is Ancestor-Worship.

Take again this description by a Japanese newspaper: 'The customs prevailing in the West seem to differ considerably from those in vogue here in the matter of reverence paid to illustrious ancestors. Especially does this contrast seem marked between Japan and her trans-Pacific neighbour — the United States. We were once surprised to hear from an American gentleman of education that his countrymen and countrywomen, deeply as they cherished the memory of the great Washington, would not care to

uncover their heads and pay homage to the tomb of the father of their country. Our surprise was subsequently removed by the reflection that in the United States individualism is paramount and family considerations count for naught, the descendants of any man, of whatever illustrious services to the country, being esteemed on their own intrinsic merits without any regard to their descent. Such is not the case in this country. We see quite a large number of men, many of them of mediocre mental capacity, and not a few below the average standard of intelligence, enjoying affluence and ease by virtue of the deeds of their illustrious forefathers, who flourished in some cases more than ten centuries ago. Philosophers may sneer and demagogues rail at what they consider an absurd and unfair discrimination in favour of that limited section of the public. But the institution is an outcome of the particular organisation of Japan and of her peculiar customs, and, in spite of the sneers of philosophers and the denunciations of demagogues, it will continue as before, though perhaps in a more or less modified form as required by the future constitution of the Empire. The reverence paid by posterity to forefathers of distinguished merit takes another form and gives rise to another custom. We mean the construction of splendid shrines dedicated to the memory of ancestors, and the homage paid by their posterity at them. Such edifices are counted by millions in this country. They are found by dozens in every thriving city, nor is there even a rural village or hamlet in the remote corners of the country but possesses one of a humble description. . . .' Follows a plea for the disassociation of the Great Shrine of Isè, the shrine of the Imperial, Heaven-descended Ancestors, from all narrowly religious notions.

Consider also this account by the one living alien who is the true adoptive child of the Japanese mysteries: 'The secret living force of Shinto to-day means something much more profound than tradition, or worship, or ceremonialism. It signifies character in the higher sense,—courage, courtesy, honour, and above all things loyalty. The spirit of Shinto is the spirit of filial piety, the zest of duty, the readiness to surrender life for a principle without a thought of wherefore. It is religion, but religion transformed into hereditary moral impulse, religion transmuted into ethical instinct. It is the whole emotional life of the race, the soul of Japan.'[1] And also: 'He who would know what Shinto is must learn to know that mysterious soul in which the sense of beauty and the power of art and the fire of heroism and the magnetism of loyalty and the emotion of faith have become inherent, immanent, unconscious, instinctive.'[2]

Is it not a labyrinth? But also does it not explain much,—the difficulties of a Japanese Constitution with an Emperor whose removal from a divine enthronement must outrage the profoundest and most ancient instincts of a people; the supreme importance of the perpetuation of family lines, that a man, on his death, be not left to perish utterly for lack of a devout child to keep him, or at least his memory, green and alive within the ancestral pales of the national cult; the sequent mysteries of Japanese adoption; and food-offerings to the viewless dead; and the cheerfulness (relative) of death in happy Japan, where this Shinto, this cult of filial piety, this devotion to forefathers, makes death to seem but a paler

[1] Lafcadio Hearn's *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*. Mr. Hearn is a naturalised Japanese. [2] *Ibid.*

life. And is not that, to the Western mind, crowning absurdity, the conferring of posthumous honours—brisk, usual, seemly as it is even in to-day's Revolutionary Japan—does not even this capital puerility become not only explicable and comprehensible, but even fit and proper by token of all that can be known or determined of a positive quality in this esoteric, progenital pietism? I think I am a Japanese and I reflect: 'My father; my grandfathers; my ancestors; of these I have been nurtured to believe, as I do believe, that they were Japan, therefore great; that they are the Past, therefore worthy; that they are the Present, because I am of them; that they were the creators of this Paradise, the causers of this Me. Therefore shall I not honour, reverence, worship them, saying: "*Ye forefathers of the generations, and of our families, and of our kindred—unto you, the founders of our homes, we utter the gladness of our thanks*"?'[1] So the Emperor of Japan, upon a visit to an outlying province of his realm to umpire the autumn army manœuvres, before returning by special train to Tokyo will raise one or two local heroes, who flourished in these immediate neighbourhoods five hundred or a thousand years ago—the Emperor will promote them a degree in official rank. It is an honour to the neighbourhood and to them. Or if one of his trusty counsellors will die to-morrow, he shall be raised a degree before burial, perhaps after it. And why not, when you take the standpoint of Shinto, the national cult? Is it so absurd if you adore, or even do reverence unto ancestors?

It is not a religion. As one commentator in English says: 'It has no system of dogmas, no semblance of creed, no infallible book, no idols, no separate priest-

[1] The Shinto believer's daily orison: Lafcadio Hearn's translation.

hood, no moral code, no promise of heaven, no threat of hell.' Yet it is a religion. 'Meanwhile' (writes a Japanese) 'it can be said that Japan remains faithful to her ancient national religion. This she piously cherishes, at any rate, to the extent of the manifestation of reverence for ancestors and heroes. Every town, every village possesses more than one *miya* (Shinto temple). In 1898 there were 664 great temples, 191,242 shrines, and 15,983 Shinto priests. Each temple has its annual festival. Even the Buddhist believers take part in the ceremonies, and go to adore the Shinto gods. The festival provides a variety of entertainments for all classes of society. Thus it is not only a religious ceremony but a social custom which adorns life with pleasure and gaiety the while the Buddhist solemnities inspire only sadness and melancholy.'

You will perceive that we here discover Ancestor-Worship in a new character. It is evidently the National Amusement!

It is also the *bête noire* of constitutional government in Japan. It is also the nerve of the nation's marvellous homogeneity, the central fire of its burning patriotism. It is at once the driving force of its politics, and the break upon its political development. It is its strength abroad and its weakness at home. Yet it is the inspiration of its heart, though it be the dust in its eyes.

Consider this aspect of it as the nation's strength abroad, reported from the mouth of a Japanese ancient by that alien initiate of the Japanese mysteries whom I have already quoted: 'The old man answered with simple earnestness,—"Perhaps by Western people it is thought that the dead never return. There are no Japanese dead who do not return. There are none who do not know the way. From China and from

Chosen [Korea], and out of the bitter sea, all our dead have come back,—*All!* They are with us now. In every dusk they gather to hear the bugles that called them home. And they will hear them also in that day when the armies of the Son of Heaven shall be summoned against Russia!"'[1] What a task! To fight battalions of the dead! To move against legions of ghosts! To charge embattled spectres! What a war!

But the great question, deep, enigmatical, unanswerable, puts itself thus: Is this thing to be the golden, necessary bridge between Japan's Past and Japan's Future?

While we wait for Japan's answer in events, let us finally reflect whether this Thing—be it an elusive nothing or the Soul of Japan—let us reflect whether it be not a Thing for our envying, for Europe's, for the Occident's regretting? For is it not the prophylactic of that disease, that canker, that worm, that insidious, baleful, repulsive enemy, that incurable, ineradicable, incorruptible, that mortal Life, that immortal Death, Oblivion? Oh, my Grand Dames, ablaze with the lustre of your queendoms of fashion, of riches, of salons, of courts, of bluest blood, and most ancient lineage, do you not envy the wife of the Japanese peasant? Is she not the richest, the grandest of mortals, for that she holds Immortality in fee? And you, my friend, ten times a millionaire, mayhap, what would not you give in exchange for this gift for which the Japanese peasant pays nothing? What would not any of us, all of us, give in exchange for it? To stay the approach of the monster, to stop his awful appetite ere his jaws may close upon us for ever, to appease his insatiate lust of possession,—even to make a

[1] Lafcadio Hearn's *Kokoro*.

brief truce with him, to bargain a temporary enfranchisement from the service of his appalling uses,—to be remembered a little longer than the herd—what price shall we not pay for this boon? But Oblivion is incorruptible. The monster will not be bought. With all our science, all our experiment, all our speculation, all our majestic triumphs in every sphere of knowledge, we do not yet possess the secret of this malady. We have not isolated the Oblivion germ. We have no serum or lymph to inoculate against this direst and most fatal of diseases. To-day it slays as ruthlessly, as pitilessly, as inexorably as yesterday and of old. And immeasurable riches, it seems, cannot purchase what the Japanese beggar possesses! Plainly, there is something wrong, something awry, in the System of our Western Civilisation, some wheel awanting, or gone out of gear, which the Japanese System owns or maintains in working efficiency. The Japanese cheat Oblivion; they have blunted the sharpness of Death; they have drawn his sting. This their worship of Ancestors confers immortality on the meanest, on the poorest, on the most miserable! And we, of Europe, of the great, the conquering, the mighty, the dazzling West, we—why, we die, and 'are forgotten'!

I think this worship of Ancestors must be the Soul of Japan. I think this because, translated, it means Immortality. For the soul is the immortal part of us, is it not?

## XXXI

## HUMOURS OF THE TIME

Some time ago you might have read in Japanese newspapers the story of a colloquy between Japanese political leaders of secondary rank which vouches the humour of the Revolution. I will repeat it, with names disguised.

Mr. Yamoto, a prominent member of a leading political party, decided to secede, and called upon his friend Mr. Matoka, another member of the party, to communicate his resolution. Having heard it, Mr. Matoka rallied the seceder about his motives and professions.

'You are always talking about civilisation. What, then, is civilisation? Do you mean wearing a high white collar [a "choker" as our youth say] like Mr. Okuba?' This from Mr. Matoka.

'No,' said the other.

'Then is it combing one's hair so smooth that it looks as if it had been licked by a cat?'

'No,' said Mr. Yamoto. 'I mean by civilisation habits like those of Europeans, who, for instance, take a delight in eating strawberries at home with their families.'

'So!' said Mr. Matoka. 'Then the Japanese are essentially a civilised people. In Japan, however,

strawberries are scarce, and the Japanese therefore eat *daikon* [cured radish] instead. The distinction between civilisation and barbarism after all, then, is only the difference between strawberries and *daikon.* Isn't that so?'

Here another leader of the party, Mr. Kando, interfered. 'Ha,' said he, 'I am fond of *saké* [rice-wine], but my children prefer sweets. If it be essential to civilisation that all the members of the family eat the same thing I must stand out.'

Mr. Yamoto, upon this, made to leave, but Mr. Matoka continued the discussion. 'Can Yoguchi, your close friend, be regarded as civilised?' he asked.

'Not he,' said the other.

'Am I civilised?'

'You! You are a barbarian.'

'What, then, do you say to Takamuna?'

'Well, he's nearer civilisation, perhaps; but he's too fond of women, I'm sorry to say.'

'In that case, is not Marquis Toi [leader of another party], to whom you are now to bow down, also a barbarian?'

Here Mr. Yamoto escaped amid the guffaws of his late political friends.

If the humour be not indiscreetly obvious even a stranger to all aspects of the Revolution must perceive that it has its light moments; that it enjoys a jest upon itself. On other occasions the joke is wholly for the outsider. For instance, you read this label upon a bottle of Japanese scent—

Superior
Lavende
RWater
Preparedwitagr
eatcare erom

selected F
reshliver
Manufactured
and Bottled By
Gustav
Boehm
Paris
Sole Agents.

You read the label and you laugh uproariously at the Revolution, which has become an unconscious joke. The fact is, if you go about in Japan looking for this kind of thing, the Revolution becomes a perpetual joke, down even to the English of its bluest official notice papers, revised, it may be, by a Cambridge or Yale graduate. Judge it by its English and the Revolution is fit only for the comic papers ; it might have been inspired by the grand dames of our Caroline era, with whom it was a fine accomplishment to spell ill. In one respect Tokyo surpasses herself, that is, in the English of her shop signs. It is much funnier than is intended ; it is always more laughable than is hoped for. Of course the English shop signs of Tokyo, or of Japan, are not of the slightest importance to the present or to the future of Japan ; they have as little relation to the value, the success, or the failure of the Great Experiment as had Marlborough's original orthography to the progress and issue of the Flemish Campaign. A Revolution—what matters it how it spells in an alien tongue ; of what significance is it if it make chaos of a foreign syntax ?

But for my part I think the Revolution only means to be kind. From the grave reflections and serious studies to which it invites you, it considerately withdraws you for some lighter exercise upon its mode of

announcing its newest insect powder: 'For Sale or Hire, Jumping Bug.' The Tokyo hairdresser joins in the kindly conspiracy to amuse you by proclaiming himself a 'Head Cutter' or 'Berbar.' The hatter amusingly masquerades as a 'Hotter,' and the furniture dealer sprawls lengthily upon his signboard as a 'Confectionner of Fournitures for All Countries.' They are all in the plot, I think. The umbrella maker will not be outdone in the polite and thoughtful effort to divert you; his establishment is 'ANUMBRELLA SELL.' It is a masque of all the Trades, in which the dry goods dealer struts before you as a 'General sort of straw hat Dealer; New and Stylish Straw Hat will make to Order'; while the cobbler bears upon his front—

Boots and shoes made to order
and
Repairig neotly done
wite
First class workmen ship.

Even the lean apothecary has a sly hand in the generous jest, for you find that he appears with, 'The most efficacious mabicine for wring the Political stomach, bowels scik and meny biscasas coming from vomiting anb sunstrkoe, etc.' I think the apothecary must be a secret hater of the Revolution, and that he wishes to wring its political neck. 'Biscuit, The Wine,' is the small restaurateur's appearance in character, and a considerable hostelry sustains the well-planned farce with a sweet intimation that, 'The Proprietress is well prepared for Supper, Cold Collation, which will be provided in the evening, as per menu.'

Even severe and haughty Japanese officialdom contrives to entertain you, to provide for you a little distraction from the racking problems of the present, the past, and the future of the Revolution. There may indeed be a doubt whether officialdom's intentions are truly kind. It is perhaps only by accident that its intentions sometimes issue in farce or broad burlesque. A provincial government, with a view to the improvement of public morals, not long since prescribed a head-to-heel bathing dress for all bathers upon a strip of sea-beach much sought by foreigners in bathing pants in the hot summer season, and by Japanese fishermen and others in nothing, at all seasons. There was soon a little comedy upon the strip of beach. Within the enclosure of the boating clubhouse of the foreigners these took the sea in pants. A policeman of the provincial officialdom came suddenly, with angry gesture and remonstrance, to point to the immoral inadequacy of the dress of the bathers. He threatened arrest. With gentle urgency was he bid to look over the fence. There, over there, upon the public beach and in the sea were his compatriots, in point of numbers a crowd, and in point of attire, naked. Why did he not arrest them? 'They run away when I come up,' said my policeman. This, in truth, was but an incident of a burlesque in several acts. We had the little girl of European parents ordered home to drape her arms improperly bare from her wearing a sleeveless summer frock, and we had a Japanese policeman appear one throbbing morn upon our beach to show us how it should be done. He came upon the sands wearing a bathing suit of foreign pyjamas. So he stalked into the surf. Appearing thence he stood upon the middle beach, removed the pyjamas,

wrung them, towelled himself therewith, and flinging them lordly over his arm, strode homewards, stark as innocent Adam. The intention may not have been to amuse us, but the effect, its issue, was a jest of many days among us. Japanese officialdom has required the distracted commander of a great foreign ship to remove his vessel, within forty-eight hours, more or less, under pain of being mulct in the penalties legally attached to the offence of causing and maintaining a 'public obstruction.' The order to the distracted commander was written upon official paper, and it was delivered only a year or two ago. Here the intention to amuse was not at all apparent. Nevertheless there was a very diverting joke made of it, for the great ship was officially designated a 'public obstruction' by virtue of her having been cast high upon a Japanese shore by a great Japanese wind.

In Japan you are liable to be entertained in this sort even by Parliament, which, as I have before told, but lately legislated against smoking by minors, the while the women-folk of the land have smoked since they knew tobacco, to their great comfort, no doubt, in their lean and empty days. Similarly, a longer while since—but not so very long ago—the abolition of cremation—the commonest and sanest disposal of the dead in Japan—was decreed because report declared it to be discountenanced in Europe, sublime seat of the beautiful civilisation which Japan had set herself to absorb. But upon receipt of a better informed report, signifying that the enlightened minds of Europe highly approved cremation, the decree was incontinently revoked.

Well, after all, these things are like Tokyo's sign-boards and the stolen labels on Japanese scent-bottles.

They are like these in that they are nothing, or no more than the accidents of a great haste to be Europeanised, the uncontemplated antics of an attempt to achieve the Evolutions of a millennium in a few decades.

I am more justly and perhaps more happily entertained by the logical antics of the Revolution. There is my friend who sought out a Japanese teacher of the language to employ him. Upon satisfactory credentials an engagement was made, and my friend made progress in the acquisition of a Japanese language. By and by he proposed to talk with people of the streets, intent upon probing the mind and secret thought of the Japanese People. But even with much knowledge acquired the task was mysteriously difficult. 'Mr. ——, it is strange,' said my friend to his tutor, 'notwithstanding all your teaching and all my labour of learning it seems I find an insurmountable difficulty in conversing even with the common people of the street. How is it?' 'Ha!' said the tutor with some satisfied unction, 'I haf taught you high-class Japanese, what you call classic. You are gentleman. You should not speak like common people.' There is a Japanese barrister-at-law—also of the Middle Temple, London —who has expounded profound theories before an assemblage of juriconsults in New York. The other day he published a gravely argued article in a Japanese Review, proposing the desirability, if not the necessity, of firing every cherry-grove in the land. 'If the space occupied by every cherry-tree were planted with a pine-tree the country would be greatly enriched. . . . Cherry-blossom viewing is not a diversion in which an aspiring nation can indulge in this busy age.' There is also the Judge who the other day heard the suit of

the foreign proprietor of a Japanese mineral water. A Japanese maker was using a colourable imitation of the foreigner's label. The Court of first instance gave the foreigner judgment. The Japanese maker appealed. The foreigner asked an order of the Court, inhibiting the Japanese maker from using the imitation label pending the Appellate Court's judgment in the cause. The Judge refused the application. 'It is winter-time,' said he, 'when there is no great consumption of your mineral water; when, therefore, you cannot suffer much loss from defendant's use of the imitation of your label.'

You smile, but, rightly judged, is not the unconscious humour of the Revolution a thing to be expected, that is to say, fit? To me it is like the Japanese Constitution, proof of the splendid courage of the Experiment. I enjoy it nevertheless.

## XXXII

## ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE REVOLUTION

When, in pursuit of my study of the Revolution, I went to see the habitation, and for a brief hour, if so it might be, to invoke and hold high converse with the spirit of the Imperial University of Japan, in the Kanda district of Tokyo, I was set out to inspect the institutional descendant of what, says the Guide-book, was once the 'Place for the Examination of Barbarian Writings.' This was the style of the Imperial University of Japan a little over thirty years ago, and the style, by all authentic accounts, was accurately descriptive of the function. In pre-Revolution days—fifty years ago and less—the Japanese student who looked into a European text-book risked his neck. Quite often, alas, the risk became fact, so that the Revolution, no doubt, lost many a young recruit who had a marshal's baton in his knapsack and never knew it. Then the pre-Revolution Government, which was not the Mikado's, constituted a 'Place for the Examination of Barbarian Writings,' meaning chiefly a bureau for the dilution or devitalisation of the dangerous truths dangerously set forth in the writings of the leading savages of Europe—as J. S. Mill, Hegel, Comte.

This 'Place' is now the Imperial University of Japan, with Colleges of Law, Medicine, Engineering, Literature, Science, and Agriculture, and an ambition

to affront the world with its own triumphs in all the spheres of true knowledge. This fact is a more graphic description of the Revolution than it is possible to write with a wealth of adjectives—the most graphic description save one other, perhaps, which, however, if of nearly equal effect as an illustration, is certainly of a less noble significance. By token of the Imperial University of Japan—by token of its direct descent from the 'Place for the Examination of Barbarian Writings,' the Revolution has sprung from a negation—that is to say, a lie, unto the very summits of truth. From being a despiser and contemner—nay, even an assassin, of the truths of the Barbarians, it has become more barbarian than the barbarians, more solicitous of the truth of their truths, more idolatrous of their majesty. Who would not acclaim this Revolution?

So I was visiting, as it were, a Golgotha, as it were the realised fabric of a New Age, when I went out by jinrikisha to the buildings of the Imperial University of Japan in the Kanda district of Tokyo. Here, where they killed, they now worship. Admirable regeneration, with a tear for the brave who died in the time of killing, before the glorious advent!

The fabric of the New Era is in brick, imposing, handsome, if somewhat irregular, and almost always, I suppose, in process of extension or rebuilding. When I was there they were raising a great new block for one of the Faculties, and pale students of Law besought their way, uncomfortably, unfamiliarly, among mason's tubs and lime pits. I walked under arches, along sounding corridors, in the semi-glooms of colonnaded stoops, giving upon calm, cloistral quadrangles. Against the light of windows opposing those in which I might look I saw close-packed ranks of crouching heads and

the silhouettes of restive professors. Quick feet clanked on corridor flags, and young men of twenty or thirty, in European dress or Japanese, passed me, scarcely curious. They were preoccupied with studies, and forgot to quiz me, notably a stranger. The habitation was all proper, and the air—the soul—fit. There was the deep, subtle, inaudible cadence of incorporate mind at work—the fit 'soul'—and these were its proper halls, its adequate housing. The vast, low, humming of the revolutions of that superb mechanism, the human mind, filled the air, unheard, and the walls and roofs were commensurately impressive.

I had my Professor to hunt down, and upon pursuant inquiry ran him to earth—an Englishman with a jesting face and a genial habit after unthinkable years of the excruciating loneliness of a 'boundless contiguity' of incalculable aliens—of such stuff are we happily made.

'Well,' said he, 'you see what you see.' We were among the student draughtsmen of the Engineering College. 'Know anything about engines?' He stretched a big sheet and held it out before him as a picture-dealer shows you a picture. 'Horizontal; sixty horse-power.' It was the complete thing, from furnace to fly-wheel, with the scale in a corner, and every rod measured to it in feet and inches. There were heaps of them about, of all sorts. We looked over the shoulders of youths at all stages of the game, laying the base line of sectional elevations, writing in the last measurement to scale. They did not trouble to look up at me, and I suppose the fathers of some of them were swaggerers and swashbucklers of the Feudal Age.

'Come and see the shop and our new foundry.'

The foundry smelt new; it wasn't quite complete. The Professor took up a thing of plates and rods and looked at it with an interest clearly genuine. 'Blast furnace idea,' he said, 'no infringement of ——'s patent. They do these things in their spare time.' He spoke nonchalantly, as if just conscious he was not speaking to himself, or as if it didn't matter much. 'Yes, we'll give the blast furnace idea a chance. I think it should do.'

Later, at the College of Agriculture, a few stations by train and a mile or two more by rikisha, from Tokyo, I saw many more wonders. I saw silk-worms nurtured, kept, housed, under the supervision of a Japanese Ph.D. as if they had been the germs of a new race of beings. All the paternal solicitude of the scientific experimentalist was expressed in the eyes and hands of this Japanese philosophic doctor. Japan, you see, hopes to erect Sericulture into a science. Plots of the world's cereals were being treated with decimal doses of all the known combinations of silicates and sulphates. Japan, you see, believes that the agricultural potentialities of her soils may be multiplied many-fold with the aid of Science, the modern Magician.

When I was leaving, a bundle of literature was put into my hands. I looked at some of it, at the titles of it: 'Change in Length of Ferromagnetic Wires under Constant Tension by Magnetisation,' by Mitsuhashi Hatsugoro; '*Thuya orientalis* at sea-level,'—Yoshino Mutsu; 'Absolute Messung der Schwerkraft in Kyoto,'—Nitta Hiroshi. They were papers contributed to the College Journal, written and printed in English or German. Japan has joined the Modern Argonauts. She is out upon the great Mission of Civilisation—Original Research.

The students of the Imperial University of Japan, late 'Place for the Examination of Barbarian Writings,' number well on to 3000, and Chinese, Indian, Malay, Filipino lads come over the seas to it, at which you might not be surprised after you had seen even a little of it.

It was another day and other scenes in the great Bay of Osaka when, from the quarter-deck of a torpedo-boat tender we beheld a Fleet asleep—asleep in the heat haze, languorous, unstirring, semi-transparent, of a Japanese May morning. A cruiser at the far end of the Review line was a creation—a fancy of the haze. Just there, it seemed, the haze was dense; and the local density took the shape of a cruiser; it suggested a leaden-white hull, the shadows of two funnels, the thin ghosts of two masts and the spectres of two fighting-tops. The May morning was out upon a prank. In league with the morning mists, it multiplied the Japanese fighting Fleet by a sportive creation of hazy, unsubstantial, unreal cruisers. But if it did this, the May morning could not uncreate the battleship that neighboured us across the space between the two middle of the four Review lines—she at the end of the second, we at the corresponding end of the third. True, she still slept at 7 A.M., but she lived. Corkscrews of smoke, thin, russety, twirled upwards from her funnels, straight up, boring the cheating haze to find out and report how much there was of it between us and the blue. This—the smoke—was life. Little figures—belittled by distance—appeared incidentally round the shoulders of casemates and disappeared through little doors; or they jiggered up and down ladders to appear and disappear among the stanchions,

boats, rails, guns, ventilators, binnacles, awnings, spars of that lofty house of organised mysteries, the 'midships superstructure of the battleship of the day. The little figures were also life at 7 A.M. on the breast of the grey monster, sleek, smooth, confident, despising, overbearing, that opposed our torpedo tender, ex-tramp-steamer, across a strip of smooth, oily pond, which yet dimpled mysteriously with far-spent heavings born of a forgotten gale of the distant high seas on a forgotten yesterday. They are memorials of a dead but once terrible Force, those mild undulations that invade and confirm the calm and the privacy of landlocked bays. As such they are a message, almost a story.

An hour, and the Fleet awoke. Meantime we were yet a great little world by ourselves. The haze gave us a delightful privateness. But a mile or two off-shore we were yet well down the horizon, for the shore and Japan, like the spectral cruiser at the far end of the Review line, existed only as a deeper shade of grey. But the voice of a great city, its morning chant, billowed out of the greyness; deep, remote, low, muffled; reminding us that we belonged to the world, yet, by contrast, affirming our exclusive calm, encouraging the egotism of detachment. I looked along the central 'street' of the Fleet and said, 'We are a world; we are the World.'

An hour and the Fleet awoke. Bugles rang out and trickled like the music of fountains in a silent hall of the gods. Banner lines ran from sterns and stems to foremast and mainmast heads and from truck to truck, in the swift manner of lighted powder-trains. We were a Fleet, awake and 'dressed.' The morning, in league with its mists, had been waiting for this. With a kindly thought it veiled us 'undressed.'

'Dressed,' we were fit to be seen. The hazes were already diaphanous; they but winnowed the sunshine. Soon the mysteriously heaving pond was a brazen mirror with moving indentations. The battleship's smoky corkscrew found the blue. The spectral cruiser was a silver-white ship of the Fleet. The shore, the great city, the mountains that looked upon it—Japan—became chromatic; yellow sands, mottled city, black-green mountains. We were part of the world, yet a little vain of the isolation which the patrol boats still preserved for us, though we lost our delightful privateness.

The Fleet was fifty ships at anchor in four parallel lines, three miles long; fifty ships, five of them battleships, one, the biggest afloat, over against us there, upon this mirror sea, under this May-day sun, with pairs of gigantic snail horns thrust obliquely out of the fore and aft barbettes. Five battleships, thirteen cruisers, seventeen torpedo boats, ten destroyers, with coast defence ships, and other fry, and another fleet scattered on Japanese coasts unreviewed; and this, mark you, three years since. It is another graphic description, another illustration, of the Revolution. Albeit it is of a less noble significance than the University upon the site of the 'Place for the Examination of Barbarian Writings,' it is yet wonderful, as the world counts wonders.

An hour or two more and the western prospect, where, now empurpled, the haze lingered, loath to flee the sun's challenge,—the western prospect hinted the Imperial cruiser: her bow, her funnels, a spar; dim in the face of the retreating haze, like the water-mark in your notepaper. I turned to look at the Fleet. Its decks were black with the motionless ranks of crews

come to quarters, shoulder to shoulder, rigid. I looked west again and the Emperor's cruiser and its escort tossed foam from their bows. Soon they reduced speed, and came upon us with the laggard feet of prideful dignity. The Fleet, the sea, the air, waited, silent, without motion. The crooning of the city at business was hushed ; the sun, I think, stood still. We were, I suppose, like a photograph of Piccadilly in which every hurrying thing is caught in the midst of its hurry to be for ever immobile.

Bang ! The Salute began, the Imperial ship and escort yet a mile away. Bang ! bang ! bang !—the quick-firers. Boom ! boom !—the gigantic snail horns. Bang ! bang ! bang ! Boom ! Bang ! bang ! bang ! Boom ! Every muzzle spat balls, billows, and balloons of smoke, whitish-yellow, revolving, eddying, quivering, swelling, kicking, and these rose sulkily, and hung, and slowly put out long, large arms and wings, which themselves grew and expanded until the Fleet disappeared in a universal, yellow, pungent fog. Bang ! bang ! Boom ! The Salute continued from fifty blind ships each blinded by its own fog.

Then Peace ! The peace of Heaven or the primordial world ! The Salute was ended. The smoke curtains lifted. The Emperor and his escort were within the lines. He was reviewing us, and the world looked on, mute, or only with a chattering on local quarterdecks which could do no injury to the wide, throbbing silence of the immobile theatre of sea and sky in which the Emperor's ship and escort moved.

For an hour the crews were 'Attention.' The Emperor's cruiser came back between our midmost lines. Then, as she swerved to drop anchor ahead of the heaviest battleship afloat, the black ranks broke

and, in the twinkling of an eye, there were empty spaces and hurrying units on every deck. The sun resumed his course, the strident cackle of the city came to our ears, pert launches broke the line of patrol boats, and we went below to pledge the Emperor and Great Japan.

Afterwards we saw the Japanese bluejackets' hammocks, and heard about his meals and his drill and himself; and an epauletted officer, exceedingly easy in manner, stated in centimetres the diameter of the Whitehead torpedoes he showed us. Doubtless he could have told us in milligrammes the amount of the charge for a torpedo five metres and a fraction long, but I did not ask him.

A generation ago, or so, Japan, of the material of a Fighting Fleet, had only the men; everything, that is; yet nothing.



AT AN ALLIANCE *FÊTE.*

## XXXIII

## SPIRIT OF THE REVOLUTION

The Revolution unconsciously chose a 'psychological moment.' Consider it. It seems as if the Muse of History took counsel of her sister of Drama to decide the appropriate epoch of the new player's appearance. Surely it is the spirits of dead poets that inspire History. Who knows? Eras and events so cunningly managed—as in this very case of the Japanese Revolution—betray the contrivance and the legislation of the perfect Imagination, with its magnificent instinct for balance, for compensation, for justice, for drama.

Consider it. Is this not the epoch for the new message, and after a procession—the procession which has become historical tradition—of men with their message, might it not be a new, surprising, exhilarating stroke to present a People, a Race, with the message? If this be the issue of the consultation of the sister muses, let us be glad. It is something quite new. No doubt there have been the Greeks and the French, but it is possible to detect the voice of one man, or, at any rate, of groups, in all the thunder of their deliverances.

The epoch, the crisis, is almost self-evident. They who hope, they who dream, look with increasing fatigue and a growing despair across the face of the world.

Faiths have been crumbling these fifty years, have they not? And democracies, quite or nearly without shame, have shown us their cloven hooves, have they not? Plutocracy is fat and sensual; aristocracy is incompetent and *fainéant*. Expert taste decides that there is even a dearth of poets. The one light is science, but is she a light? She enslaves philosophy, religion of the imagination, and in her duel with faith, religion of the senses, faith gasps with loss. In the wreck even romanticism is crushed or forgotten.

The epoch, the crisis, is all but self-evident. For my part I do not doubt it.

At the first blush it is fantastic to suggest a Japanese message. 'At least,' you say, 'wait a bit—until the Revolution be more fully accomplished.' Agreed, but it is at least entertaining to look for a message; and our growing despair may take heart upon the first light of the new dawn. Let us hail this dawn, even before the first tenuous border of its nimbus has appeared; let us hail it even if it prove to be only the false dawn of the East. Let us, by all means, get upon an high mountain, where we can see the deeper horizon. Let us, for that matter, imagine a dawn. It is possible to hope anything in the midst of Revolutions; so let us hope all things.

Besides the crisis there is the person, the Man, the People. There is Japan. I do not like to think that there is nothing in this fine conjuncture—the rise, the growth of the crisis, and the appearance of Japan. It is not in the spirit of Drama that there should be nothing in this conjuncture; it would be an unspeakable outrage upon the unities if there were nothing; we should justly accuse the art of the contrivers of the drama; we should despair of the justice, of the poetry,

of History. Our last hope—History, or the Spirit that is behind it—must then fail us. It must go by the board with Faith and Democracy.

Taking the broad hint which the remarkable conjuncture gives—the conjuncture of a damaging crisis in our ethical, psychological, political outlook, and the apparition of Japan—accepting the hint of the conjuncture, there is, so to say, a *prima facie* case for a Japanese Message. We may mistake the prophet, but let us at least hearken unto one that hath somewhat the dress, if not the face, of the Seer ; unto one whose star hath risen in the East at the appropriate—may we not say the prophesied—hour of the night.

Well, then, what is the spirit, the secrecy, the implication, of the Japanese Revolution?

Mark what things it is not ; what descriptions, formulations, cannot be used of it. It is not the rising of a people at the instigation of tyranny or injustice, as the revolt against our Charles I. Nor is it this revolt ennobled by espousal of a passionate Idea, as the French Revolution. It is not the removal of one dynasty by another, although an event closely resembling this was incident to its early commotions. There has been no ecclesiastical or religious urging or motive in it ; its authors and its children beheld no Heaven in their reward. It is not even a revolution in the name of Liberty ; for is it not one function of the Revolution to teach Freedom to its children to-day? Almost, as one thinks of it, one is tempted to say that it is not a Revolution. Yet this thing which is not a Revolution has swept away a System of Government, transformed a People, changed the face of an Empire. It is not a Revolution, but it has accomplished more than any Revolution in history, with less bloodshed,

and incomparably less waste of treasure. It has brought a nation and a sovereignty from the Feudal Age to the Twentieth Century in four decades. A portent, if not a Revolution—a portent, it waits a word to characterise it if it be denied the name and style of Revolution.

Lacking a dictionary term applicable to this new phenomenon, I shall call it the accession of a Despotism —the accession of the Despotism of Reason. Of course I am looking at it ideally, as if it had accomplished its task. Nothing could be less true of it than any assertion that its work is ended, its programme fulfilled Yet to what extent it is an achievement ; to what extent it is and is to be a Revolution, and more than a Revolution, to this extent it is and will be a Despotism of Reason—the acceptance, in an absolute sense, of a divine Rationalism, as the absolute rule. Japan was a despotism before her Revolution ; she is a despotism after it. She has but changed masters, but whereas she had a man for tyrant, she now has Reason.

In such wise, it seems to me, is the spirit, the secrecy, the implication of Japan's Revolution, and I am not sure that here is not to be sought and found the great first cause of its enormous success.

Thirty, forty years ago, a band of men, supremely able and patriots, seized the State, the Polity, of the time—Autocracy, Feudalism, Insularity, Immobility— and, flinging it with their might upon the rocks at the feet of Reason—the rocks upon which she stands— cried to her, ' Be our Dictator in its re-creation.' And Reason consented, as she must consent, to the appeal. Reason became Dictator. She was enthroned. Her accession is the Japanese Revolution — in its ideal aspect.

There are several wonderful things hanging upon this interpretation of Japan's Revolution. One avenue of thought about it leads to a Japanese Message for the crisis of the times.

The theory explains nearly everything ; it suffices to account alike for the successes and for the failures of the Revolution. It does not, of necessity, touch the antecedent problem—how a band of Japanese men, almost youths, bred in the Feudal Age, were able to recognise Reason. Once they knew her, and having once made the first commitment into her hands, the rest followed ; but the recognition and the first commitment are inexplicable as the origin of speech and the rise of the first image in the human mind.

The theory explains the ease of the Revolution. Other revolutions have sought or invoked Reason, without knowing where she might be found. They could but cry blindly. But the Japanese revolutionaries, they looked out from the Feudal Age towards Europe —Europe with its evocation of Reason from a thousand years of pain and bloodshed—and all that was required of them was wisdom of choice ; in other words, a just appeal to Reason. Ignoring ecclesiasticism, ignoring philosophies, ignoring the Schools, ignoring worships, ignoring even enthusiasm, they sought proved principles and final methods ; in other words, they appealed to the heart of Reason.

Think what this means. I do not know that the leaders of the Revolution themselves knew what they did. What they did is almost romance. We—Europe —from a thousand years of pain and bloodshed had evoked and embodied Reason in a certain number of proved principles and final methods—such principles as the necessity of toleration, the sanctity of public justice,

the mutual responsibility of state units—such methods as government by majorities, centralisation of authority, delegation of administrations to trained experts, and so on—we had evoked and embodied Reason in a certain number of proved principles and final methods, but along with these we held and hold an equal if not greater number of dubious usages and habitudes—tradition, sanctity of the past, fear of innovation, ecclesiasticism, worship of pedigrees and wealth, and so on, usages and habitudes, doubtful and temporary beside the finalities of Reason. What the Japanese revolutionaries did was to select our proved principles and final methods and ignore all else—that is, to make appeal to the heart of Reason so far as we, Europe, after a thousand years, had had it revealed to us. Is there not a touch of romance here? We labour and sweat for a thousand years—we, the peoples of Europe—and find some good of life. Nevertheless, laden, bent, oppressed with many ills, the fruit of our labour, we but scantily enjoy the good we have found. But this child among the nations comes from the East and trips among us lightly, laughingly, taking whatever of good we have proved and employing a discriminating, adult judgment to reject the ill. Europe has quarried the gold of reason but the labour leaves her near incapable of enjoying it. Japan has it at the price of asking and, unimpaired by the toil of its search, extracts its finest uses. We have sown but we do not reap. She reaps where she has not sown. 'Nothing is stolen; everything is paid for,' said Napoleon. It is untrue. Japan has been a successful thief and we all wish her well.

In other words, Japan's Revolution has been accomplished by a despotism of Reason. I repeat that I am viewing it as if its last task were accomplished. That

it has much to do I have admitted. It would have had less had it made a completer resignation into the hands of Reason. Observe the conspicuous failure of its Constitution, and inquire if the cause be not that Reason has not been admitted to dictatorial, autocratic powers with respect to it. It seems to me that the fiction of a god-emperor is adequate explanation of the failure of the Constitution of the Revolution. Reason at once challenges the absurdity, but here the revolutionaries turned their eyes away from the light she offered. Her despotism was not suffered to be universal. Herein is the explanation of one, if not of all, the failures and shortcomings of the Revolution.

The theory in fact explains the ease—nothing is easier than Reason when, as in the case of Japan, she has Power for an ally—and the success and the failure of the Revolution. Where the rule of Reason has not been accepted or not permitted, the Revolution has failed ; the measure of its despotism of Reason is the measure of its success.

And here I am well constrained to give a thought to the might-have-been of the Japanese Revolution—to its achievement ideally considered. Was there ever an opportunity like to that which the Japanese revolutionaries have had? Able men and patriots, with limitless power, called to re-create a state composed of a pliable, patriotic, capable people—was ever an occasion such as this, with all the proved principles and final methods evolved by Europe before their eyes and to their hands? That they have partially failed to rise to the height of their opportunity—that Reason has not been accepted as an universal law—is merely, I sadly suppose, to say that the revolutionaries, though able and patriots, were human.

To me there is a Message in the Revolution though it has its failures. The message is both ethical and political.

Ethically I am emboldened to look facts in the face. This is to accept the despotism of Reason. Spurning consolation from possible contingencies—as that there is a Heaven of reward for earthly virtue—refusing the inspiration of doubtful mysticisms—as that the human heart is the throne of Liberty—I recognise only the need of supplying every disability of conduct, every wound of circumstance, with its appropriate cure, its sufficient palliative. My philosophy of life is doubly enriched. I see farther and I see more minutely. The long result I am content to expect. The immediate need I hasten to supply. What knowledge there is I seek to use with every necessary speed; what theologies there are, or what they may be, I shall dream of or amuse myself withal. I accept Reason for despot in the concerns of life, and it will be a sin in me when I hesitate to go or to follow where her cause and effect shall lead. Hesitation of itself will be a sin.

Politically there are now to me two parties in the State, two politicians—the new Conservative and the new Liberal. The former says, 'Wait until it is seen if it be good for the people'; the latter says, 'Reason cannot wait.' Tradition, the past, its sacrosanctity, is now nothing politically, however much it may continue to be romantically. I ask only, 'Is the thing good?' not, 'Is the People prepared?' or, 'Is it contrary to recent experience?' or, 'Is it expensive?' or, 'Is much effort required?' Japan—the Japanese revolutionaries had but one question—'Is the thing good?' that is, 'Has Reason approved it?' and they have come near to the performance of a political miracle. I believe political

miracles to be as nearly possible of performance elsewhere if the test question be that which has been put to nearly all—unfortunately not to all—of Japan's modern institutions by Japan's Revolution.

So I think I should say that the Revolution has a message for the crisis that is come upon these times, but probably I shall be misunderstood when I say that this message is merely a message of recognising the sovereignty, the despotism, of Reason in our human affairs, and of limiting the range of our active, disturbing anxieties to the execution of the laws which this Sovereignty, this Despotism, imposes.

## XXXIV

## *WELTPOLITIK* OF THE REVOLUTION

At present it might seem that the sole 'external relation' of the Revolution is with or towards Russia. It is, of course, a fallacious and deceiving appearance. It is the World that is concerned. The affair is not Russia's nor ours, but, so to speak, History's.

But the *Weltpolitik* of the Revolution without doubt has, for the present, its circumscriptions and special relations. It is safe to say that for the present it is not interested in any African hinterland question, nor in the Austro-Hungarian race crisis, unless in a remotely objective sense. For all that, it is a world-interest, even as the fabric of civilisation is one great economy; one soul, one body, whose throne and government, though they may be a heart and a mind, preserve an intimate nervous association with a great toe and a little.

'The focus of international competition is steadily moving towards the Pacific, where, owing to her geographical and historical position, Japan is destined to play an exceedingly important part.' This is Marquis Ito in a manifesto to his followers eighteen months ago. He announces, you perceive, that Japan, or her Revolution, if it be a world-interest only in an academic sense as yet, as might be argued, insists that it is and shall be a vital interest on the face of the broad, immense

Pacific. 'Subjectively,' says he, 'we are already the heart and the mind, the throne and government, of half the world, and there are signs that this half may in a period, historically short, become the whole.'

The Revolution, on its own confession or profession, owns in these times pertinent, direct, even instant relations with the Pacific—that is, with or towards the empires, sovereignties, democracies, peoples, that look out upon that sapphire infinity. For my humble part I think it is necessary to admit this confession, or profession as you take it, of the Revolution. You cannot over-estimate the importance of a miracle, nor challenge its pretensions.

Well, then, look at the Pacific; the sovereignties and peoples that peer upon its horizons—the Russian Empire, the Chinese, the Malay archipelago (a continent split up by oceanic canals), Australia, New Zealand, South America, the United States, Canada. Japan's 'external relations' are with these; with all of them; for that they are all members of the new, marvellous Comity of the Pacific. The Revolution academically is an affair of History, of the civilised world. Practically it is an affair of this Comity of the Pacific, its chief affair, I think; its heart, its pivot, almost its crown. How splendidly Japan sits upon the map of the Pacific; how splendid is the accident of her geographical position in her admitted theatre of external relations is open upon the face of the map. Consult the vast circle described by the littorals of the Pacific, and see how finely poised Japan sits, as it were in its eye. Almost, you might say, it is the Eye itself of this Ocean; the eye of it and its containing continents. At any rate, admitting the convention under the illusion of which we think of the North Pole as the top of the world, Japan's is a fine

station in the forehead of the noble face of the Pacific. And Japan thinks she is, or that she may be, the brain of the Pacific. More than this, there is in her thought, as Marquis Ito discloses, a distant, shadowy future, in which the Pacific will be the World.

Of course—yet why 'of course'?—you do not find the importance of the Revolution, as a miracle, admitted or perceived by the Pacific Comity. 'Yah! yah!' said a Member of an Australian Cabinet to me as our launch jibbed in a steamer's wash in Sydney Harbour, of all places in the world. 'Yah! yah! Japan is coloured labour, and that's the whole of it. 'Enry, tell the boys to come aft and we'll sing the Australian anthem for this gentleman from Japan.' And they sang it, or rather he bellowed it.

New Zealand has heard that Japan is a very pretty country and quaint. 'Isn't it? But it can't be anything so fine as our Rotorua country, or the Wanganui River. Oh, you can't leave the country without seeing them. You'll make a great mistake if you do. And there's the Southern Alps and the Otira gorge, when you go to the South Island.'

Meanwhile Japan buys Australian wool for her first attempts in cloth-making. By and by she hopes to undersell English serge in the Australian market. At the same time she sends commissioners to New Zealand to investigate the land settlement system there, which, she has heard, is very successful, and therefore bound to be instructive. Incidentally she tells New Zealand that she should send commissioners to Japan to learn the first principles of the science of afforestation, but New Zealand hasn't heard of her need of the science yet.[1] She asks the commissioners very seriously if the Rotorua

[1] These very commissioners were in New Zealand during a few weeks' stay of mine there some months ago.

country, and the geysers, and the hot lakes, are not as good as anything they have in Japan. 'And you must see our Southern Alps and the Otira gorge after you've been up the Wanganui River.'

Japan is by nature polite; Australia insists upon being genial. Japan is content to be beautiful; New Zealand insists upon her own surpassing loveliness.

Meantime Japan, besides that she is polite and infinitely beautiful, orders spools and re-examines her system of land tenure. For her the focus of international competition is steadily moving towards the Pacific; and the Pacific includes the Southern Pacific, where are the Australian Commonwealth and New Zealand, one of which sees Japan as coloured labour, while the other hears that she is almost as pretty as herself.

In British Columbia—which is Canada in the Pacific Comity—they almost succeed in being original as against Australia. There Japan's Revolution is Mongolian or Asiatic labour, whereas in Australia, as I have said, it is coloured labour. Australia, I think, says, 'Colour is race'; British Columbia, 'Race is colour.' I think there must be here a subtle distinction. Assuredly it is not the same thing to say, 'The kettle is black,' and 'The kettle is sooty.'

Down in Oregon and California, the United States of the Pacific, the Revolution becomes 'the little brown men,' or 'Quaint Japan,' or, when the American Demos shall raise his raucous voice, 'Mongolian labour' again. It used to be 'the Menace to American Trade in the Far East,' and occasionally it is this still.

Meanwhile Japan sends promising students to Yale and Harvard, and promising mechanicians to Pittsburg and Schenectady. Those come home to train the brain

of the Pacific, and these to roll steel and turn out rails as near to standard as may be. It is hoped, you observe, first to meet the home demand for American rails, and afterwards to send consignments of the Japanese manufacture of the same to China, Korea, Australia. Such hopes are not for to-morrow's breakfast, it is certain, but the Revolution, realising that the focus of international competition is steadily moving towards the Pacific, trains the brain of the Pacific, and spends money in large experiments in order to provide a hand and tools for it.

China, incompetent, oppressed, despairing, blind—China alone of the Comity of the Pacific perceives the Revolution ; she most correctly appreciates its significance. By latest accounts there are 800 or 900 sons and daughters of wealthy, highly-placed Chinese families in the schools and universities of Tokyo. By latest accounts Pekin University is under the direction of a Japanese principal, and by latest accounts the central and provincial governments of China are more and more leavening their legislatives and executives with a leaven of Japanese talent and Japanese skill in the arts and modes of Europe. And here enters that large suspicion of Europe's—To what end, with what motive? Europe, knowing little of the Revolution, or knowing with a knowledge that is mistaken, starts, as from a nightmare, when China collogues with the Revolution. I wonder if Europe, being shrived, would disclose a guilty conscience for explanation of this whispering, suspicious, self-accusing surprise upon knowledge of clandestine communications 'twixt the new Japan and the old China. Ah! has not History its discoveries, its revenges, its long, patient, imperturbable justice? Is there some canker of a distant Opium War and a recent Kiao-Chau Bay in the pathology of the 'seizure' that

comes upon Europe when she hears that the new Japan and the old China have come together?

Well, it is but a nightmare—upon certain conditions required by Japan, conditions which, as you will find, are almost guaranteed by the Anglo-Japanese alliance of January 1902.

There is nothing so absurd as the Yellow Peril. Never was a bigger, emptier bogey. The human mind, when it imagines a terror, commonly makes it large. The human mind, under those conditions, is never, as it appears, big enough for itself. It says—'I will fill the sky with my Fear; I will make me a Colossus of Fright.' With the result, it seems, that there is all the more wind and all the more rags.

The collusion of Japan and China means nothing more than that China begins to feel what a fool she has been. The pity of it is that she sends only 800 or 900 students to Tokyo. This number, out of 400,000,000 of a population, only shows, worse luck, how very little of a fool she feels herself to have been. Work it out to an average and you find that one in 470,588 and a fraction of the Chinese people begin to perceive that there is somehow something wrong somewhere in the Chinese way of looking at things. So the one in 470,588 and a fraction sets out for Tokyo to find out what the deuce is wrong, leaving 470,587 and a fraction behind him in China quite satisfied with the existing order.

'As to an alliance of the yellow races,' said Marquis Ito a year or two ago, speaking to a Japanese friend —'Why should we ally ourselves with any people simply because they are of a similar complexion to us? To dream so wild a dream is to confess utter inability to grasp the meaning of our new career of progress.

The scheme is altogether too belated and foolish to commend itself to any man of sense.'

Is there more to be said? How further prove the Yellow Menace a nothing? How further prove a negative?

I might quote you dozens of explicit Japanese disclosures of the precise relation of the Japanese Revolution to China, and thereby constructively annihilate a nothing—the Yellow Peril. Let this statement by a Japanese blue-blooded Viscount to a Japanese audience suffice—'China's feelings towards this country have undergone many changes in the past. Before the war [of 1894-95] they certainly despised us. After the war for a time they naturally felt sore, but being a sensible and practical people, they asked themselves the question why they were beaten. And they replied that it was because the Japanese had been Occidentalised. And so they came to the conclusion that if they wished to become a powerful nation they must to a large extent adopt Western methods. They are still more of that opinion now, and they feel that we can supply them with a suitable medium for obtaining what they so much need. They are beginning to see that a Western civilisation which has percolated through a Japanese filter will be a fluid more acceptable to the ordinary Chinese palate than the beverage taken as it leaves the fountain-head. An Orientalised form of Occidental civilisation has special attractions for them. They do not forget that in religion, in customs and habits of life, and in many other respects we differ entirely from Europeans and Americans. To assimilate themselves to us is in every way an easier task to the Chinese than to assimilate themselves to Europeans. There are benefits we may derive from intimacy with China. Our

population is growing apace. We want new markets for our produce. We want new openings for our people. China is at our very doors, and the situation there is not strange to us. Hence the country offers special advantages to us. My aim is to impress these facts on you, and to point out that the future of China is a subject second to none in this country.'

In their hearts responsible Japanese statesmen foresee the partition of China. At any rate I might quote you the undisguised views of one or two of them avouching their prevision of that cataclysm. The Yellow Peril is thus more or less than a nothing. It is an insult to the intelligence of these Japanese statesmen. Not that they believe partition to be the end of China or of the Chinese race. They are wiser than this. They see in partition a national discipline and chastening, like the exile of Israel, to be followed by a reconstruction like the Japanese Revolution. 'There is no guarantee,' says a Japanese newspaper, writing so recently as August last, 'that all our well-meant efforts at aiding China may not be thrown away, and that China, we mean the [present] official China, may not even raise her hands to strike her best friend. . . . The Chinese as a nation may go under for a time, but they are bound to raise their heads again sooner or later.'

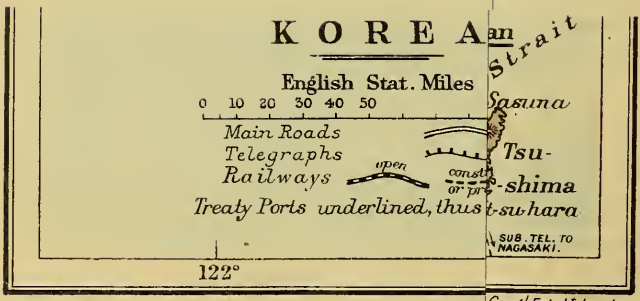
And then there is Russia, the Russian Empire, Juggernaut of the nations. She also peers forth upon Pacific horizons. She would be mistress of the Pacific Comity, as Japan is, or would be, its brain. She is the present absorption, the present total engagement of the thought of the Revolution, though I repeat that the affair is not, cannot be, Russia's because it is History's.

## XXXV [1]

## *VIS À VIS* THE TRADITION

NEVER was a question between nations more simple, less implicit, than that between Japan and Russia. Never, perhaps, was a question with a future more difficult to forecast. And we shall perhaps go back to the Moor invasion of Europe, and a certain battle on the plains of Tours, to find an issue of parallel significance. Never were the causes, the elements, of a high political difference between nations so plain, so easy of analysis and display; never perhaps was a difference whose future course was a harder secret. Look at the contour of a mountain against the clear light of advancing dawn: it is not more sharp and definite than the historical necessity of the Russo-Japanese Difficulty. Attempt to decipher the shape of the same mountain in a cloud-oppressed midnight: with equal success may you chart the future of the Russo-Japanese case. In point of facility, the future of the case is in inverse ratio to its past.

[1] The author, in justice to himself, may be permitted to say that this, and the immediately preceding and following chapters, were written a good many weeks ago. He does not, however, feel that any material alteration is necessary in the expressions he used at a time when the Far Eastern crisis was neither so acute nor so prominent as it is at the moment of his writing this note. Whatever the issue of the present crisis, he adheres to the view that a Russo-Japanese conflict is finally inevitable. The only question in the minds of those who have studied Far Eastern politics on the spot usually is—the date of the opening of hostilities.


KOREA
English Stat. Miles
0 10 20 30 40 50
Main Roads
Telegraphs
Railways
Treaty Ports underlined, thus
open
Strait
Sasuna
Tsu-
-shima
t-su-hara
SUB. TEL. TO NAGASAKI.
122°
Geog' Estab' London

Korea is necessary to Japan ; it is essential to Russia; and the spirit of final accommodation is, humanly speaking, impossible between Japan and Russia. This is a full statement of the Russo-Japanese Question. It is upon this basis, through these symbols, that the Japanese Revolution meets or establishes relations with the Russian Tradition. The case is sometimes called the Manchurian Question ; Japan herself at this moment names it the Manchurian Question. Nevertheless he understands the intricacies of the whole fateful imbroglio who perceives that Korea is necessary to the Russian Tradition, and essential to the Japanese Revolution, and in addition knows that the mind of ultimate accommodation is, humanly speaking, impossible between the Tradition and the Revolution. The Tradition despises the Revolution ; the Revolution fears dishonour before the Tradition, and, with Korea, there you are : you have the Russo-Japanese Difficulty, for a Russian Korea is the dishonour of the Revolution, and a Japanese Korea is the death of the Tradition.

Nevertheless, simple though it be, it is, as I say, a remarkable, almost a phenomenal case. So easily understood it is yet almost portentous. A case for the capacities of the simplest mind, it is yet an epoch in History. Russia, how much we know of her and her Tradition, yet how little ! Japan, how little we know of her and her Revolution, yet how much ! Russia, what is she, what may she not be? Japan, what is she, and what may she not be?

The Russian Tradition has been long with us, of course. Yet the world, and England peculiarly, is as little accustomed to it as ever ; we find it as difficult as ever to estimate it, to take account of it. We never seem to understand it, although it nods to us on a




Stanford's Geog' Estab' London

thousand occasions, and ever salutes us across a thousand lineal miles of buffer territory. It is almost a daily emergency, yet we never come to any kind of terms with it; not even unfriendly terms. Can we say that we know it, however much we know of Russia? And the Japanese Revolution; we are now in some sense its sponsors, but how much do we know of it, how much is it possible for us to know of it?

Well, then, if the Russian Tradition be our—be England's—daily rumination and we yet come short of a working theory of it, and if Japan's Revolution, though we be its allies, be still, in some sort, an uneasy enigma, what may be the import of an encounter 'twixt the Tradition and the Revolution? As a speculation this is amusing; it is like trying to find, or proposing to find, the product of two algebraic surds. And yet, a schoolboy who knows his map of Asia could explain the Russo-Japanese Difficulty!

Nothing is more certain, humanly speaking, than that the encounter comes to war. This prognostic is scarcely a prognostic; it is little more than an understanding of the Difficulty. The real prognostic would be an accurate estimate of the forces behind the simple, unequivocal elements of the case; an interpretation of their meaning, a measure of their stability, an exposition of their origins, an examination of their methods, a forecast of their destinies.

Count Okuma, one of the men of the Japanese Revolution, said but the other day: 'The Far Eastern problem is one which will not be solved in a century. The Manchurian Question affects not only Russia, China, and Japan. It is one of the greatest problems of modern politics, and it may never be finally solved.'

Here the truth is hinted by a man who is part of the heart and head of one side of the Russo-Japanese Difficulty,—the truth that this difficulty is a collision, an inevitable collision, of incalculable forces—the forces of an extraordinary Tradition—a Tradition extraordinarily successful—with the forces of an extraordinary Revolution—also extraordinarily successful.

A Tradition, whose soul is a powerful, acute, machiavellian autocracy; a Tradition which is as yet unbroken by a single permanent failure, meets a Revolution which has known no check in a course of momentous success, whose soul is the high hope of an unbeaten Asiatic race new-launched upon a world-career. Korea, the map, explains the collision, but gives no hint of its real meaning, nor any measure of the strength, psychic and merely dynamic, of the colliding forces.

You are really then only at the beginning of the relation of Japan's Revolution to Russia—the Russian Tradition—when you perceive that war is, humanly speaking, inevitable sooner or later between Russia and Japan on the Korean Question, or, as Japan calls it, at the moment, the Korean-Manchurian Question. This is no more than to say again that Japan's Revolution is not Russia's affair, but the World's. Or put it this way,—that the encounter is between a Tradition whose methods and achievements affect the whole world subjectively, and a Revolution whose records and successes interest the whole world subjectively. Conceive—attempt to conceive—the portentous effect in international politics of a stoppage, accompanied by disaster, of the Russian Tradition, the Tradition whose extraordinary methods and extraordinary achievements are blazoned upon the firmament of modern history. The effect, the meaning,

of a check accompanied by disaster, to the Japanese Revolution may be no less portentous.

There is, then, more than a war between Powers in the Russo-Japanese crisis. There is a collision of two unprecedented, unknown, incalculable forces; an encounter of two enormous Ideas; two Time-spirits; two theories of progress; two interpretations of the art of civilisation. And the issue—the ultimate issue—is doubly complicated by the witness of the origins and history of the two Ideas. Neither is wholly European, neither completely Asiatic; yet both are Asiatic and both European, in origins or in history.

For guidance I fall back upon their respective evident, or demonstrated, motive and conduct.

This higher ground I know is usually ignored as irrelevant, and argument closes upon calculations of effective tonnage and trained battalions. I refuse to believe that upon this lower ground the crisis is resolved one way or another. Is it on the face of it inherently or historically possible that an Idea backed by a nation of forty-five millions which is as a phalanx for unity and has never known alien overlordship, an Idea which has already achieved a record of rare, admitted worth, backed by a race which knows the 'pride' of this record and will die rather than surrender its continuity —is it inherently or historically possible, not to say probable, that this Idea should die or disappear in an unsuccessful campaign, or that it should be overwhelmed by the broadsides of a fleet?

No, I refuse the clue of effective tonnage and trained battalions, and for guidance fall back upon the motive and conduct, evident or demonstrated, of the contending principles—the Tradition and the Revolution.

I have said my say about 'The Yellow Peril.' Were there anything more than wind and rags to it, Japan's motive and conduct might be damagingly impugned. But it is nothing but wind and rags in the present Idea of Japan's Revolution. What then is the positive tendency of the Revolution?

A leading Japanese Review, writing a year ago of 'Japan's Mission among Humanity at large,' gives these hints (I quote its own rhetorical English version) :—

'Japan's progress proves :—

'Firstly.—The so-called modern civilisation, nursed in the lap of the rich and fertile soil of Western Asia, after marching through the countries in Europe and America is making her way toward her home where she had formerly her cradle ;

'Secondly.—The fact that before the sweeping influence of civilisation, the great question of racial difference is altogether done away, and that the Teutons, Slavs, Latins, and Mongolians will join their interests ;

'Thirdly.—When civilisation runs its course, bringing together all the nations of the world under its sway, the unity of the human race (which is now at best an ideal one) will be realised. These are the ultimate goals toward which civilisation is marching. Japan's mission at this juncture would be to act as the leader of the Asiatic countries in introducing the modern civilisation. China and Korea, for instance, can learn about civilisation much faster and easier [from us] than from the countries in Europe and America, for they have common systems [with us] of letters and to a certain extent of ideas.'

This, if you like, is a profession to invite confidence, —recall that there is no profession of a task or mission

sanctified by a revealed religion—but then there is testimony of conduct.

In the record of Far Eastern politics, since the China-Japan war of 1894-95, there is, at the least, a Port Arthur against Russia, a Wei-hai-wei against England, and a Kiao-chau against Germany. Against Japan, with interests touching her existence, there is nothing. I am wrong. In the troubles of 1900, when for months it seemed as if the hour of the Chinese Empire might strike with to-morrow's dawn, Japan, one ominous eve, sent warships to Amoy, and by credible report even landed troops. The scramble seemed to her to have begun: she took measures to stake a claim in the Chinese provinces opposite her Formosa. This is her offence. Is this not testimony?

By almost unanimous witness her troops in the Peking relief were best-behaved among the contingents of civilisation. Her account to China, after the war, was for expenses only. Is this not testimony?

With the spectacle before her of the slow but dreadful approach of the death-agony of China, her ancient exemplar in learning and art; with the apparition in her eyes of a gradual but terrible descent of the Russian Tradition from the north to menace her very goings-out and comings-in, Japan has yet retained her self-possession and has looked upon the aspect of affairs with an ordered mind. Is not this also testimony?

From the motive and conduct of the Revolution turn to the Tradition.

There is a Peace Rescript and a profession of Greek Church Christianity. These for motive if you like, and I shall not suggest that they are a profession to invite confidence. Confine the survey of conduct to the Far East and the period since the China-Japan War.

There is the 'inducement' to Japan to withdraw from her war-gained territories on the Chinese mainland, the representation, namely, that the peace of the Far East should not be endangered. There is the settlement of the Tradition upon the vacated territories, an old story now, of course,—the lease, as it is called, of Port Arthur and its peninsula. What is this? Are lying and robbery excessive descriptions?

Ignoring charges of connivance in, and fomentation of, the Chinese crime against humanity and civilisation in 1900 as unproved, there is the occupation of Manchuria. This—legitimate enough in its first excuses—was continued in face of the Russian signature to the general treaty between the Powers and China guaranteeing the latter from territorial spoliation in spite of her misdeeds. Secondly, it was continued and is continued, as the world knows, in face of a signed covenant guaranteeing its return in portions. What is this? Are lying and robbery excessive descriptions?

Again, there is nearly unanimous testimony that of all the contingents of civilisation at the Pekin relief in 1900 the Russian was the worst-behaved. The best that is said of it is that it was as courageous as circumstances required; the worst is that its conduct was an alternative orgie of bestiality and barbarity.

In point of fact, the agents of the Russian Tradition in the East admit everything, save perhaps the bestiality and barbarity of its troops. Their signed covenant is never other than a parley with circumstances, and they make it clear enough—they have made it clear enough—that they intend it to be no more. There would scarcely be a Russian Tradition were it otherwise, for it is chiefly its standards of conduct that vouch a new, untested principle in the Tradition. These have

rendered unto it its success; they are, so to speak, its hitherto unchallenged Idea. There may be nothing in international morality; it may be permissible to use a signature as a parley with circumstances if the signatory can do so with impunity. Who is to say nay? Diplomacy may be entitled to assume the character of a brigandage wrapped in forms and armed with opportunism. Who is to say that it may not?

But we can have our preferences. I humbly claim to prefer other standards, and I humbly protest that Civilisation and the Twentieth Century—I shall not invoke a Peace Rescript and Greek Church Christianity—are bound to prefer other standards. I humbly protest that a signed bond is a mockery of civilisation and this century when it is a parley with circumstances, and I protest that when diplomacy openly proclaims itself a brigandage, with opportunism for its pistol and forms for its mask, our century in respect of its diplomacy is the Fourteenth, or mayhap the Tenth.

So, then, with motive and conduct for guidance, I look to see the Japanese Revolution succeed against the Russian Tradition; that is to say, I look for justice in History; I expect to find that truth is its own ultimate strength and vindication; I anticipate that those standards which civilisation has agreed to regard as the higher shall also be proven the stronger. And this even if—as is possible—the tonnage and the battalions of the Tradition should for a time succeed, as have its lies and its brigandage.

And remember that all that the Revolution asks of the Tradition is toleration and respect for its clear rights.

## XXXVI

## THE CLIMAX AND ITS PARABLE

The Alliance with England is the climax of the Revolution. It is not the capital of the column, for the column is not complete. It is a climax, the climax of a unique spectacle; of a phenomenon, if you like, unexplained, esoteric, inestimable. On the day of the proclamation of the Alliance, the atmosphere in Japan became charged with a new quality. The Japanese breathed a rare, electric, intoxicating air, come down from the skies on the wings of the proclamation. In the Japanese House of Representatives—their House of Commons, such as it is—men reeled, delirious, tongue-tied, their speech, if not their breath, for the time being taken away. They then went mad, even as sane men will on a tremendous occasion. The country, in sympathy, also went mad. It feasted riotously and drank deep. The Japanese, you see, have no indigenous or original mode of celebrating a maddening occasion. They say even as we say,—'The gods having visited us, let us fill our bellies and tickle our throats.' The civilisations of East and West meet at some points.

I was with them at one of their feasts, a strange, incommunicable parable. There were Japanese thousands all under the open sky, and many intertwined and fluttering pennons. Perhaps one in a thousand of

the thousands could reason from our, the European, cause, to our, the European, effect; one in a thousand that is, had spelt out a sentence in the English language some time in their lives. Once this one per thousand had had a gleam of the process, of the order, of our thought. The rest—well, I suppose I, to them, might be one per million of us who had peered, or tried to peer, into the process, the order of their thought. Nevertheless for that day and for many days after we were brothers; they were my kith, I was theirs. But I could not communicate this extraordinary fact to them nor they to me save in formal words which really meant nothing. Behind the asseverated protest,—'Now we are brothers,' there were a thousand years of strangeness; of complete, unbroken alienation; a thousand years of separate history with two continents and many seas for ever between; a thousand years of far-divided, mutually ignorant search for the meaning of life. A common origin, a common mother, under some Aryan roof-tree, in the shadow of the awful Caucusus, we might have had; but whither in the universal glooms which ante-date History, whither in our separated destinies since History began, whither had we not wandered, what farthest poles of psychic and political experience had not divided us? Yet after a thousand years, or ten thousand, we were met, and even as human aeons are long we found it—I found it—hard to believe, wonderful to think, that we were brothers. I wandered about at the feast, among its thousands; frequently pledging the Alliance in draughts of good lager beer with my Japanese brothers, but always in a mist of strange interrogatory surprise at thought of my new-found, long-lost kin. It seemed incredible that these thousands should be kin to me, should be wishing well to a new

fraternal relation with my country, in pot after pot of good lager beer, there, everywhere before my eyes, with the prodigious eras and epochs that had divided us in all the unexplored past behind and over us — behind and over our respective inherited consciousness. An inexplicable, incommunicable parable, I came to no solution of it, but failed not to drink one more pot to the Alliance when a fat tea-merchant took me by the arm and bade me to the booth where they were commemorating an epoch in History by dispensing libations of Japanese-made lager of very fair quality. There was a terrible crush at the booth. In our zeal for the Alliance we nearly fought for the beer. An epoch in History does not occur every day. The beer, I may say, was free for the day.

I mean no jest at the Alliance. On the contrary, I hail it with a sincere and ardent sympathy as the just climax of the Revolution. In one of its apparitions it daunts me, but that is nothing.

I wish I might explain the vertigo with which the Japanese nation was seized when the Alliance was announced. This race, you must know, has practised self-control and the repression of confessionary emotions for many centuries. It succeeds well as the result of the long habit. Yet the Alliance with England snaps the curbing chains as gossamers ; and the nation is, for the time being, mad. What does it mean ? One thing or two. It means that the Alliance was an enormous surprise. Does it also mean that it was injudicious on the part of England ; that the Japanese were surprised that we should have proffered or accepted it ; meaning that they unguardedly or by implication confessed that it was a sacrifice, a 'give-away,' on the part of England, which, if it delighted them, also privily astounded them ?

A German of erudition and some original capacities said to me in Tokyo: 'You have allied yourselves with a race of monkeys. And you all think what Cranborne said.'[1] An American, much travelled in the East, of extensive commercial association with the Japanese, said, 'England went into this thing blindly; Japan is waiting to be found out.'

Here, you see, you strike the same channel of thought which the Japanese Alliance-madness itself opens up before you. I repeat that I wish I might explain the national vertigo of the Alliance time in Japan. I feel persuaded that it has a significance of its own. If in one of its apparitions the Alliance daunts me, in another it puzzles me. The one may be nothing, like the other, but I cannot, if I would, resolve all doubts about Japan. I began by postulating a Mystery. I do not end by fathoming it.

But there are appearances, shapes, visions of the Alliance that are nothing but pleasing. It is not to be said that they are now, or ever may be, substantial, real, quick. Thank God, not that the future is in no man's hands, but that it is in the hands of no single nation, no single sovereignty, no single Power, nor even in the hands of a banded continent of Powers! This assurance at least allows us freedom of speculation. It permits us to make plans. It even invites us to hope that our plan may be the future, not the plan pigeon-holed in chancellors' bureaus in St. Petersburg or Berlin.

Well, then, I for one am glad to think that it is we, England, who are sponsors of the Japanese Revolution.

[1] This is that unique pronouncement of a happily unique statesmanship: 'We do not seek Alliances; we grant them.' Heaven preserve such statesmanship unique among us!

I am glad that it is we and not the French, the Germans, the Russians, or even the Americans, who have shaken a fraternal hand with this People and their Revolution. To me there is more than politics, or the Far Eastern situation, in the affair.

Bring it down to the hard, level basis of politics and the Far Eastern situation if you like, and even on that basis we have every reason to be satisfied. There is more than a modern Navy equal in its own sphere to that of Russia; more than a modern army of half a million of men who can fight on rice. There is a Japanese nation numbering forty-five millions, six or seven millions more than the population of France, a million or two more than the population of the United Kingdom; a nation whose territory has never been violated by invader; a nation with splendid traditions of war behind them, and an opportunity before them, which they themselves know better than the world, of creating a more splendid tradition of peace, even if that tradition of peace must be raised upon a new tradition of war.

Yet I for one presume to scan a wider field than politics and the Far Eastern situation in estimating this Alliance affair.

We are, I say, by virtue of the Alliance, sponsors of the Revolution. I do not say that we guarantee it. Japan does not ask us to guarantee it. We recognise it, and this is all that the Revolution needs, all that it asks, or more. But how much is this recognition? What does it mean? 'You have allied yourselves with a race of monkeys,' says my German friend. 'You do not know Japan,' says my American.

What does it mean if not that we have recognised the success up to the present of an unparalleled experiment, an experiment which has no kindred or precedent

in history, recognised it when yet the rest of the world holds back, chary, doubting, suspicious, contemptuous, scorning? The rest of the world says: 'Asia, all Asia, is hopeless, doomed.' In their hearts they say, 'Let it perish.' We say, scarcely knowing it perhaps: 'There is no such continent as Asia; there is only civilisation and the honest endeavour of nations to realise the ideals of civilisation.'

We recognise Japan. Japan is the last hope of Asia. Elsewhere independent Asia is the sufferance of Europe or the jealousy and mutual fear of the units of Europe. Japan falls, and Asia, like Africa, like the Americas, like Australia, like the islands of the seas, lies prone at the feet of Europe, until the European Age has passed. Japan, so to speak, is the forlorn hope of a lasting truce and final peace between Asia and Europe, almost between Europe and the rest of the world. Japan falls, and Asia, the World, lies at the feet of Europe, but it is a world of vipers scotched, waiting the decline of the European Age, with a baleful eye of cumulative vengeance. Japan lives—the Revolution prospers, obtains universal credence and universal recognition—and there is hope of a constructive, final peace 'twixt Asia and Europe, 'twixt Europe and the world. Crush Japan and you sacrifice the last hope of this peace. Repression is fatal to all hope of this peace. The final world-content must be based on world-toleration. Repression is the logical and natural opposite of toleration. Believe, recognise, admit Japan and you preserve a link for a treaty of constructive peace with Asia, a golden bridge on which representatives of the two continents may some time, some day, meet to sign the treaty of final peace, of final world-content. To crush Japan would be not to crush her, but to add a new and

unforgetting, an unrelenting, unappeasable, implacable, member to the Asiatic conspiracy against Europe, which smoulders in China, in India, in Asia, awaiting the decline of the European Age. To recognise Japan, to admit her, to sanction, seal, and approve her Revolution, is to fan a bright and entirely permissible hope that the Asiatic conspiracy, in despite of all the past, will turn to a penitence, a following truce—for education chiefly—and a final consummating peace. The destruction—which could not be the destruction—of Japan by Europe, not her recognition and admission, is, in fact, the true and only Yellow Peril for Europe.

This, then,—these fine hopes, this prospect even so alluringly noble—this is what the Alliance sponsors, this is that which, or part of that which our recognition of the Revolution means, that which it is besides its immediate place and importance as a factor in the Far Eastern situation, or in international politics at large. I do not think it is altogether a fabric of dreams that I raise. I look at the success of the Revolution; I note that Japan is, despite her Revolution, Oriental and Asiatic; I observe her neighbourhood to China; I remember that China already sits at her feet, that she sends her thousand students to Tokyo and imports Japanese genius to inform and reconstruct her tottering polity; I recall that Indian, Siamese, Malay minds are being trained to think and to see in Japanese schools, and I know that Japan's Revolution cannot, will not, with recognition, consent to an Asiatic conspiracy because its spirit is essentially European and profoundly rational—I pass the aspects and signs in review, and I see no fabric of dreams but an entirely permissible hope.

Is it indeed altogether beyond possibility of belief

that one of our titles to remembrance in the remote ages to come will be that we, first among European peoples, dared to recognise Japan, to admit her success, and first gave her the hand of fellowship when the world stood aloof, or sneering?

I like to think also that the Alliance is sponsor to a great ethical experiment. Why not? Europe is near two thousand years old in the use of governments which at least profess to find inspiration, direction, nay, even authority, in the canons of a revealed theology. Some say Europe is a success by reason of its reception, admission, profession of this revealed theology. Some say not. There is, at least, an element of doubt in the matter, and, anyhow, our systems are often, by universal admission, a hideous mockery of the theology we accept as revealed. Here, however, is a state that professes only reason, a state that glories in its stoic acceptance of the dread verdicts of unaided, uninspired Reason. May we not then keep a space clear, so to speak, for this great ethico-political experiment? There being a certain doubt—proven by many unlovely hypocrisies in the very midst of our systems—of the final sufficiency, the complete authenticity, of our real or quasi-theological canons, shall we not give room, opportunity, and time for the Japanese experiment with Reason, if only to see what comes of it, what its issue may be? Let me offer the most sordid of pleas: let us take a little trouble merely for the satisfaction of our curiosity. Let us note whether this experiment, which ignores theologies, resolves any of the hard problems which theologies have failed to illumine for us. It may be that some critical principle of life, of experience, of death, waits to be discovered by some such experiment as this. Wherefore, for the mere sport of the thing, as it seems,

let us recognise the Revolution which is conducting the experiment; if need be, let us guarantee it. The least we may expect is some new light upon theories of government, since here, for the first time in history, is a government which ignores theologies and enthusiasms, excepting alone the enthusiasms of Reason.

So then there are other things that our recognition of the Revolution may mean besides a curb upon Russian aggrandisements in the Far East. The Alliance has other import than the strictly political.

And even to confine the license of speculation to its strictly political import is not to deprive the Alliance of all appealing, inspiring significance.[1] Upon the disintegration of China—which even Japan accepts as a necessary preliminary to the redintegration of the Chinese race and the re-inspiration of Asia—the members of the Alliance will have their portions. Let us then map and delimit a sphere for the trial of the hope of an Asiatic re-creation. Let us enter upon a joint or conterminous occupation of the great Yangtze Valley territory, from Tibet to the Sea. There let us nurse China, and Asia through China, back to life and knowledge of its meaning,—we with our vast experience, our allies with their intimate psychic knowledge of Asia. There should be a

[1] The author may admit that in this paragraph he rather gives rein to his fancy than opportunity to any germ of political sagacity he may possess. He may be permitted to say that he wrote before the announcement in this country of the 'Mission' to Tibet, now approaching Lassa. Though he cannot doubt that this aspect of the geographical position of Tibet in relation to what is really a vast Asiatic Question—the aspect upon which he here touches—has been pointed out in some of the numerous recent writings on Asiatic and Far Eastern affairs, he himself has seen no reference to it in any of those he has had opportunity of reading. He may add that he suggested its possible future pertinence in Asiatic politics over two years ago in an article in the journal with whose conduct he was associated in Japan. He subsequently found that at about the very date of his writing, a leading Vienna newspaper had also been discussing what to him, at the time of his own reference to it, had seemed a rather far-fetched, if not fantastic, inference.

secondary aim here. Look at the map of Asia. You will find that Western Siberia, Mongolia, Tibet, and Yunnan, or Southern China, make a territorial chain. Yunnan is the French 'sphere of influence' in China. Upon disintegration it will be the portion of France. Western Siberia is Russian. Mongolia and Tibet are nominally China's and really nobody's; but Russia and France have already beckoned to each other across that wide, mysterious expanse. Russia floods Mongolia with her Cossacks; she receives missions from the Dalai Llama of Lassa and returns them; France pushes northwards from Tonkin and Yunnan. The idea, the policy, is born; and athwart the broad face of Asia a Russo-French barrier is threatened. But look again at the map of Asia. Observe that India, Tibet, and the Yangtze Valley make a territorial chain. Why not? Are not our interest and the Japanese sufficient to stand against Tibet and the Yangtze Valley upon the great day and reckoning of disintegration. And we shall have met, Farthest West and Farthest East, imperial token surely of the final understanding and peace of Europe and Asia when together we shall have brought China and Asia to light and to life!



ADDRESSES—ACCEPTED AND REJECTED.

[A Japanese newspaper's view of the Alliance with England.]

## XXXVII

## THE CRISIS

'THE dignity with which Japan has comported herself through these momentous negotiations, her calmness and and her resolution, compel even her enemies' admiration.' On the whole, the World agrees with the Peking correspondent of the *Times*. He adds: 'Her position in Peking to-day is remarkable, and the change in the attitude of China is striking.' Might not more be said? As that Japan's position in the world, if not, by her behaviour in the Crisis, rendered 'remarkable,' has, at the least, been raised; her repute increased, with a solid accretion of respect, if not of prestige? Japan, it seems, has not ceased to surprise the World.

There is a refining discipline of these 'crises'; not, perhaps, the searching discipline of War, but an improving, heartening, tonic discipline, if their trials be mastered and their temptations avoided. The World, with an appreciable unanimity, agrees that Japan has accommodated the trials and repudiated the temptations of her Crisis. And perhaps it should not be set down to prejudice if one should say that by this accommodation and this repudiation Japan has succeeded—already succeeded—as against Russia. Certainly she has increased her repute while Russia's is, at the best, what it was—no more, no less.

Of course there is more than one point of view. Japan—her Government, if not her people—is conscious that she is still 'on trial' before the world. In the rare regions where that singular, that intangible, yet most real form of power, international prestige, is gained and lost, there the candidate, the accused, is presumed to be guilty—that is to say, weak—until he has proved himself innocent—that is to say, strong. Japan—her Government—is aware of and accepts these peculiar conditions. She is conscious that she is still 'on trial' before the greater part of the world, and her enemies may therefore, with a germ of truth in their allegation, accuse 'her dignity, her calmness, and her resolution,' as if they were merely artificial. Japan and her friends might reply, if they cared, that she has but wished to defer to the opinion and to the standards of Europe, and then they might ask whether this be a fault.

There was a usefully candid display of the Japanese —not the Japanese Government's—view of the case in a Tokyo journal of a few weeks back. This journal in its 'English column'—a feature of some of the leading Japanese newspapers—says: 'Major-General Iguchi is credited with having recently uttered the following observation: "As an individual, the Japanese is a liar; as a nation he is too honest,—just the very opposite of the Westerner." All keen observers of our Government and people will admit that there is much truth in the saying. Although our countrymen have earned an unenviable reputation of being the most untrustworthy people on earth, our Government has always been scrupulously honest; in fact, we do not know a single instance where our Government has been condemned by foreigners for bad faith. Our Government has been and is too sensitive to foreign criticisms,

and dares not act in a way which might bring discredit upon its name.' And the journal goes on to urge that Japan will use Russian weapons against Russia, that, as it puts the matter, 'our diplomatists will cast aside simple honesty for a while, and meet falsehood with falsehood.'

Upon the evidence of this disclosure, it is open to Japan's enemies, even to her friends, to say that her fine behaviour in the Crisis has been the fine behaviour of the Japanese Government, not of the Japanese people. And yet, must this be held a shameful admission? Is the case so very different in Western Europe—in Germany during the South African War, in France at the Fashoda crisis, in England upon Ladysmith and Mafeking relief days? Undoubtedly the Japanese people would have spoiled the Japanese Government's fine harvest of reputation from the Crisis, if it could. A notable English journal of Japan analyses the popular Japanese view and opinion in October last. 'Almost without exception' (it says) 'the vernacular journals appear to hold that a war with Russia is sooner or later inevitable, and that any delay will only place Japan in a worse position to contend with the forces opposed to her than is the case at present. One and all, from journals of the severely scholarly type to journals which depend on the lowest form of cheap sensationalism for their existence—one and all appear to look upon a war with Russia, if not with a light heart, at all events with considerable equanimity and a firm belief that Japan will come out of the struggle right side uppermost. If, therefore, we are to regard the Press as representative of the people' [the writer of the article has just argued that we can], 'it would seem only too evident that the great majority of the nation is in favour of a warlike

policy on the part of the Government, and would view with strong resentment any drawing back. Again, if we turn from the Press to the platform, the same practical unanimity is to be observed. Where meetings have been held, they seem invariably to have been not only patriotic but Chauvinist, and if the advice of these amateur politicians had been taken Japan would have been at war long ago.'[1] The House of Representatives, a day or two after the opening—on the very day of the official opening—of its session in December, passed a unanimous censure upon the Government's conduct of the Crisis, and the Diet was at once dissolved. So we may admit that it is the Japanese Government's dignity, calmness, and resolution that even Japan's enemies have admired; not so clearly the dignity, calmness, and resolution of the Japanese people. Yet again, is it so different in Western Europe—in Great Britain, in France, in Germany? Moreover, is it not a conviction of inevitable war rather than a passion of war desired of which the Japanese People have been guilty? One who writes in this strain should not at once be set down a special pleader. There are the facts, especially the fact that Japan has been a great surprise all along.

However, there remains, as patent issue of the Crisis, Japan's new accretion of respect among the nations.

This profit has been secured by the Japanese Government in spite of the Japanese People. This means that the profit to the Japanese State has been accompanied by loss to the Japanese Constitution—a point about which the world cares nothing, but of great importance to Japan, to the future of constitutional government there, in which, possibly, is the future of Japan.

[1] *Japan Chronicle*, October 21.

The loss to the Japanese Constitution occurs because the Crisis has been managed, is at this moment being managed, by a wholly unconstitutional, unrepresentative authority, the Elder Statesmen, the ruling Oligarchy, whose place and power in the Japanese polity I have attempted in a section of this book to define and describe. Had the Japanese popular, representative view been translated or embodied in the Japanese policy, war would have been several months in progress by now, and incidentally the harvest of international esteem would have been lost. The Japanese representative House unanimously censured the Japanese Government's policy. The Government did not resign, the ultimate reason being that it is not the Government, but the Elder Statesmen—the unconstitutional Oligarchy—who are, or who make, the Japanese policy. The Crisis, as I say, has been managed by the Oligarchy. Further, it is necessary that the Oligarchy should continue to manage it. Hence the Government merely dissolved the House of Representatives, and went on as before. No outsider need presume to 'take sides' in such an affair. I do not. I merely point out the facts, germane as they are to a task of making the Japan of the moment understood, so far as that may be possible.

Constitutional government has been losing ground in Japan for several years. It has been losing so much ground that, while the present Crisis was still young, it was nearly, if not quite, a blank failure. The Crisis has confirmed this failure; if not, as it were, stereotyped it.

Well, this is the other side of that shield of 'dignity, calmness, and resolution,' which has justly elicited the admiration even of Japan's enemies. It is 'another side' which, in a book of this character, could hardly

be ignored, however little the world, absorbed, rightly absorbed, by other grimly fascinating aspects of the Crisis, may care about its being pointed out.

Fortunately the Crisis is recognised in its large aspects—portentous aspects, may not one say? Fortunately it is seen as a vast, enormous Question. Fortunately it is recognised that it is not Russia's concern, but the World's. Fortunately it is seen as at least probable History, not merely an incident of Far Eastern politics.

But the only facts realised from it, as I write, are a certain accretion of prestige to Japan, and a certain—certain in a different sense—a certain loss of prestige to Japan's Constitution. Japan, as an international State, as a member of what is called the Comity of Nations, has benefited from the disciplines of the Crisis. Japan, as a constitutional State, has suffered.

As this book issues from the press Japan throws down the gage of battle. So, it seems, she is neither unprepared nor unwilling to pass from the disciplines of the Crisis into the more searching disciplines of War.

# POSTSCRIPT TO SECOND EDITION

In the opening phases of the war with Russia, beginning a few days after the first publication of this book, Japan much more than justified every attribute of eulogy which the author, in the course of a conscientious survey of its achievements and its failures, was impelled to use of the great definitive fact of Asiatic history which he has named the Japanese Revolution. The occasion is too grave for the writer with real propriety to indulge in a merely fanciful task—which otherwise would not lack its fascinations—of attempting to forecast the further progress of the struggle. Besides, is not the gift of prophecy a regretted anachronism? All of practical observation that the author wishes to pass upon Japan's success in the war up to the time at which he writes—her success in the sea campaign, that is—is this, that probably in no sphere or phase of human enterprise is the Japan of to-day—the Japan of the Revolution—so competent to act up to a high standard of efficiency as in that of war. It is the same thing to say that in no class, no department, of human effort, is she likely at present to achieve the success she has achieved, and may yet more achieve, in war. In the humane enterprises of modern science; in the improving exercises of speculative thought; in the beautiful aspirations of art; in the sublime inspirations of the religious impulse—in all of these, regarded as spheres of human activity, Japan must as yet be content to see one, two, or more of the agonists achieving a success or recording a triumph which she may, at the most, expect only from further effort and the future. In war it is different. Russia, in fact, has encountered—she has attacked—the Japanese Revolution at its strongest point. Unwittingly she has in this war broken an elementary rule of war. The strength and sinew, the major portion of the thought-

energy and of the material resource of the Japanese revolutionaries has been spent in the task of training, arming, inspiring the Revolution to the end of its own defence. The reason is easily stated. It was necessary that this should be so. The fact of the war proves the necessity. At the same time there is this obvious inference—that the efficiency and the success of the Japanese Revolution are not to be imagined upon the scale of the efficiency and the success of the Japanese Fleet. The Revolution is, in fact, terribly lop-sided. The Japanese Navy is an illustrious creation. But there is hideous chaos elsewhere. Yet, challenged at its point of greatest strength, one may the better hope of the answering success of the Revolution. 'And,' said the leading Japanese newspaper in the opening days of the war, 'supposing we are able, with the countenance of Heaven, to emerge victorious from the terrible struggle, not only shall we be able to fulfil our onerous mission of diffusing the light of civilisation through the Far East, but we may hope to have earned, in redoubled measure, the respect of the world as well as the award of a chapter, devoted to our labours, in the universal history of human enlightenment.' In the midst of the distraction and the tumult of war Japan's Revolution can thus speak with the very accent of the angel of peace—some surety, perhaps, of future triumphs in the arts of peace comparable to present successes in the art of war.

THE END

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